

The Making of Havant



The Havant Public Service Plaza.

Volume 3 of 5

Havant Borough History Booklet No. 40

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Havant Coat of Arms

The Borough of Havant comprises the communities of Bedhampton, Cowplain, Emsworth, Havant, Hayling Island, Leigh Park, Purbrook, Warblington and Waterlooville. The coat of arms represents as many of these communities as is possible within the complete heraldic achievement whilst preserving the essential qualities of distinctiveness and simplicity.

The embattled quartering of gold and blue on the shield is an allusion to the old castle at Warblington. The keys have been taken from the arms of the monks of Jumiéges who at one time held Hayling Island. The fleur-de-lys and the colours of the quartered shield were prominent in the Arms of Roger de Montgomery, first earl of Shrewsbury, who at one time held the manor of Warblington.

The Supporters in heraldic terms symbolise the guarding and maintenance of the Arms and for Havant they are represented by two Saxon warriors. The name of Havant, or Havehvnte as it was called in Domesday Book (1086), comes from two Old English words, Hāma and funta. Hāma is a personal name derived from hām, a farm or estate, and funta is an Old English word for a spring, and the place-name presumably refers to the artesian springs in Homewell. The hammers held in the hands of the Supporters are a punning allusion to the name Hāma to identify further that the Supporters represent Havant.

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Most of the articles contained in these five *The Making of Havant* booklets are the original work of the Havant Local History Group, which were written in the late 1970s. They have been edited by Ralph Cousins and John Pile and have only been amended where further information has become available or where landmark locations have changed.

Our grateful thanks should be extended to the members of the group for their hard work in putting together this reminder of Havant's past history.

Ralph Cousins – August 2014
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The former council offices, Town Hall, at the corner of West Street and Park Road North circa 1937.



Park Road North before the buildings were demolished for the development of the Central Retail Park and the road layout rearranged.

The Mayor

By Sections 3 and 4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the council must, at its annual meeting in May each year, and as the first business, elect a chairman, whose role it is to chair and thereby oversee the conduct of the council when it meets to discuss its business. As the council has borough status, it is entitled to call its chairman mayor, and does so.

The two principal roles of the mayor are to chair council meetings and to represent the council and the borough as its first citizen.

The fact that council meetings are quite formal affairs in that the conduct of business is quite tightly constrained by standing orders places a considerable strain on the chairmanship capabilities of the mayor. It is the mayor's responsibility to ensure that, in the context of what is a political arena, the natural exuberance of the members, especially when debating controversial matters, remains within the bounds set by standing orders.

The role of the mayor, other than as chairman of the council, is wholly one arising from custom and practice. The one legislative clue as to what that role might be can be found in Section 3(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the chairman taking precedent in the borough over all other persons than the monarch.

The mayor is elected for one year, having usually served an apprenticeship of one year as deputy mayor.

Precisely what happens during the mayor's year of office depends largely on their personality, wishes and views, but their main role will be to promote the interests of the borough, in particular economic activity. They will also be devoting considerable time and energy to publicising and raising funds for their nominated good causes in the borough.

The mayor will represent the borough at civic and related events both within and outside of the borough and will often be the principal guest of local organisations.

Honorary Aldermen

Although the term alderman originated in England it had no clear definition until the 19th century as each municipal corporation had its own constitution. It was used in England, Wales and Ireland, but not Scotland. Under the Municipal Reform Act of 1835, municipal borough corporations consisted of councillors and aldermen.

Aldermen would not be elected by the electorate, but by the council (including the outgoing aldermen), for a term of six years, which allowed a party that had narrowly lost an election to retain control by electing aldermen. An alteration

Former Mayors

1974 – V Derben - Charter Mayor

1975 – K N Berry

1976 – E S M Chadwick

1977 – A J Whistler

1978 – Lt Cdr T J C Williams

1979 – M Spero

1980 – A R Slight

1981 – Mrs G V M Blackett

1982 – C E Ludbrook

1983 – Mrs K I Pook

1984 – K M Moss

1985 – Mrs T J Daines

1986 – L W G Powell BEM

1987 – L T Dryer

1988 – P N Osborne

1989 – R Beresford

1990 – Mrs B G Moss

1991 – J W Cook

1992 – G Tart

1993 – Mrs J Carruthers

1994 – Mrs A Atterbury

1995 – Mrs R Hyson

1996 – Mrs V Steel

1997 – A Emerson

1998 – F Pearce

1999 – D Farrow

2000 – P G Quick

2001 – R V Bellinger

2002 – G Erlebach

2003 – Mrs H Farrow

2004 – Mrs J R Fulcher

2005 – C Hilton

2006 – R Brown

2007 – V Pierce Jones

2008 – J Smith

2009 – Mrs J Branson

2010 – Mrs Y Weeks

2011 – K Smith

2012 – G Shimbart

2013 – P Buckley

2014 – Mrs M Smallcorn

Honorary Aldermen

1992 – L T Dryer

1996 – Mrs T Daines

1998 – R M Cousins

1998 – R Beresford

2000 – H Benzie

2000 – Mrs B G Moss

2003 – S Massey MBE JP

2004 – J Phillips

2007 – Mrs J Fulcher

2007 – B A Gardner

2008 – K M Moss

2009 – Mrs V Steel

2012 – Mrs J Hanan

2014 – Miss J Wride

2014 – D Gillett

made in 1910 prevented outgoing aldermen being able to vote. The number of aldermen was one third of the number of councillors.

Aldermen were finally abolished under the Local Government Act of 1972 in 1974 but survived for a few years later in Greater London County Councils who elected aldermen but not in rural district and urban district councils.

However councils can still create honorary aldermen and at Havant this honour is bestowed on former councillors who have given outstanding service to the

borough over a sustained period of years. No voting rights are conveyed by this title but holders are invited to civic ceremonies.

The Borough of Havant

The formation of the Borough of Havant in 1974 and the institution of the office of Mayor of Havant was the culmination of a process of growing together by a number of communities, some ancient, some essentially modern, which reached its peak after WW2 although originating before WW1. Indeed the expansion of Purbrook, Waterlooville and Cowplain started before the motor era with the spur to residential development provided by the Cosham and Horndean Light Railway which, in effect, was an electric tramway running into undeveloped countryside.

Much of what we now know as Cowplain and Waterlooville was once covered by the Forest of Bere. Apparently this was impenetrable and had to be bypassed. Thus the population of the northern part of the borough in former centuries appears to have been small and the settled communities relatively recent in origin. By contrast the communities along the flat and fertile coastal lands are ancient, dating back to Roman times and earlier, whilst Hayling Island, with its often dangerous access by a causeway at low tide, was predominantly agricultural with monastic connections. In previous times, Havant enjoyed a mixed economy as a market town and was the centre of various industries including parchment making, tanning, leatherwork brewing and milling. Emsworth was predominantly maritime in character and was the heart of a celebrated oyster farming industry which suffered a grievous blow at the beginning of the 20th century as a consequence of pollution problems.

From these essentially maritime and agricultural based origins the Borough of Havant has developed into a thriving residential area with modern industrial capacity. It also possesses, in Hayling Island, a seaside resort of enduring popularity which is one of the select number of British seaside resorts that meet the demanding criteria in respect of seawater quality and beach management laid down by the European Blue Flag Award scheme.

A Brief History of Local Government in the Borough of Havant

The Borough of Havant has existed since 1974 but the various areas which together make up the Borough have been associated with one another in some respect since 1836.

Early Days

In the 16th century, parishes (rather than villages or tithings) became responsible for poor relief, and gained the power to raise local taxes or 'rates'. This was administered by the Vestry, which resembled a parish council. Around the same time, the parish became responsible for the village constables, previously appointed by the hundred or tithing. The parish, which in medieval times was purely ecclesiastical, had become a unit of local government, taking over from the manor, tithing or hundred.

Powers

The parish – outside the chartered boroughs and towns – remained the unit of local government until 1836. In urban areas, civil parishes lost any powers they possessed in 1926, while in rural districts these powers still continue.

The basis of the Borough of Havant is the following group of parishes – Havant, Warblington, Bedhampton, Farlington and North and South Hayling, but through the years two separate areas have been completely lost: Lower Farlington and Drayton to Portsmouth and Rowlands Castle south of the Green, with Redhill, to East Hampshire District Council. In the north, Waterlooville and other small areas, which used to belong to the old Catherington Rural District Council, have been added to the old core.

All these changes took place in the great reshuffle of 1931/32.

Poor Law Unions

The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 placed great emphasis on indoor relief, with larger and more efficient workhouses than those previously provided by the parishes. In order to support these, parishes were grouped into 'Poor Law Unions' in each of which there was to be one workhouse and one Board of Guardians or Overseers, partly elected by the ratepayers, to which each of the constituent parishes would contribute in proportion to their populations. The

Poor Rate would be paid by the parish, not in respect of its own poor, but in proportion to its rateable value.

The Havant Poor Law Union comprised the parishes of Havant, Bedhampton, Farlington, Warblington and North and South Hayling, which, as was noted above, form the basis of the present borough. The extra-parochial area that is now Waterlooville (it later became Waterlooville Ecclesiastical Parish and Waterloo Civil Parish) was grouped with the Catherington Poor Law Union. Other aspects of local government remained with the vestries.

With the introduction in 1837 of the civil registration of births marriages and deaths, the poor law unions also became registration districts.

These arrangements did not suit all the parishes concerned, as some had administered the Poor Law prior to the Act of 1834 at far less cost to themselves and in a manner more suited to their circumstances. For example, the new arrangements caused much heart-searching in Bedhampton. The parish rate increased alarmingly – according to the Vestry book – while the paupers of the parish, now in Havant Union Workhouse, were not nearly as comfortable as they were before. Appeals to the Poor Law Commissioners, however, were unavailing and Bedhampton remained shackled to her neighbour.

Sanitation

During the next two decades various steps were taken, unfortunately on a voluntary basis, to try to remedy the appalling sanitary arrangements, or lack of them, in England generally.

The next development was the Public Health Act of 1848, which allowed the creation of a Board of Health for an urban area, elected by the ratepayers and responsible for sewers, street cleansing, cemeteries, public parks and water supply (where there was no water company). Locally it was only Havant who had the temerity to appoint a Local Board of Health. This sat for the first time in 1852 and one would consider that this was none too soon, judging by the number of references in the early minutes to houses without privies and with no water supply.

Boards of Health were renamed Local Boards in 1858, by the Local Government Act, 1858 and their areas – Local Board of Health Districts – became Local Government Districts. In 1875, under the Public Health Act, 1875, Urban Sanitary Districts were created and the Local Board became the Urban Sanitary Authority.

The rest of the Poor Law Union became the Rural Sanitary District, with the poor law guardians for those districts becoming the Rural Sanitary Authority.

Under the 1875 Act, Havant became the centre of one of the 24 Rural Sanitary Districts then established in Hampshire; the area of the district covered being that of the Havant Poor Law Union.

One of the drawbacks to this system was that, although the Local Board of Health was nominally in charge of the sanitary arrangements in the area, all actual sewerage and drainage remained the responsibility of individual parishes.

Church and State

In 1888 the county councils were formed and took over from quarter sessions the assessment and collection of the county rate together with the control of the police and certain other services.

In 1894, under the Local Government Act, 1894, urban sanitary districts became urban districts each with an elected urban district council, and the rural sanitary districts became rural districts with elected rural district councils. The civil and ecclesiastical functions of parishes were now finally separated and they became civil parishes, with parish councils in rural areas. The ecclesiastical function was now carried out by the parish church council – the PCC.

New Arrangements

Under the new arrangements – for what is now the borough – what had been Havant Parish, and later Havant Urban Sanitary District, became Havant Urban District; Warblington Parish became Warblington Urban District; and Farlington Parish, Bedhampton Parish, and North and South Hayling Parishes became Havant Rural District. The Poor Law Guardians (now all elected councillors) continued until they were abolished in 1930 by the Local Government Act, 1929, when responsibility for social services was transferred to the county council.

In 1902 there was a slight local redistribution. The Denvilles area and the Wade Court Estate were transferred from Warblington Urban District to Havant; the argument being that these were so obviously a part of Havant that they should be administered from there.

At the same time, a fifth parish, North Havant, was formed from the northern parts of Havant and Bedhampton. This stretched from Padnell to Redhill and was included in Havant Rural District. The tiny area in Rowlands Castle village around the Castle Inn remained in Warblington Urban District.

Consolidation

By 1931 the structure had become unbalanced, largely due to the sprawl of Portsmouth into the parish of Farlington. Because of this the Havant rural district had a population two and a half times that of Havant urban district. At the same time it became apparent that larger units of local government were needed.



Havant councillors in the 1930s.

Several solutions presented themselves. At one time it seemed possible that Havant, Warblington, Bedhampton, North and South Hayling and North Havant might have formed an urban district of Havant and Warblington, while Farlington – including Drayton and Purbrook – with Waterlooville might have formed an urban district of Farlington. In the event, in 1932, Havant Urban District, Warblington Urban District and Havant Rural District were merged, together with Waterloo Civil Parish and Cowplain from Catherington Civil Parish, to form Havant and Waterloo Urban District, the immediate predecessor of the present borough. Because the whole area was now an urban district, the civil parishes and their councils were abolished. The former villages of Drayton and Farlington (in Farlington Civil Parish) succumbed to Portsmouth's (now a City) need for increased *Lebensraum* (extra territory needed in which to live). North Havant Civil Parish – created as recently as 1902 – was abolished and divided with the newly created Rowlands Castle Civil Parish (in an enlarged Petersfield

Rural District), which also took small parts of Bedhampton Civil Parish and Warblington Urban District.

In 1974, under the Local Government Act, 1972, Havant and Waterloo Urban District was replaced by the Borough of Havant, with only minor boundary changes. The Borough of Havant is thus the successor of the Havant Poor Law Union and its council is the successor of the Havant Local Board of Health – and ultimately of the Havant Vestry.

Based upon a newspaper article by the late John Reger and notes by John Briggs

The Vestry and Local Board of Health

The study of local government in Havant in the 19th century is hampered by a lack of information. The most serious defect is the absence of newspaper reports on Vestry and Board of Health meetings until 1887 – an incredibly late date. (Alverstoke and Fareham, for example, were admitting the press to their Vestry meetings in the 1830s). Official documents are also sparse in the first half of the century. The records of the Havant Union do not survive before 1856 and the Vestry Books only cover the years 1834–51. The Board of Health minutes do, however, exist in their entirety.

Vestry

The Vestry in this period had four main functions:

- (1) Upkeep of the parish church, which was its original purpose. This was the responsibility of two churchwardens and was paid for out of the church rate.
- (2) Upkeep of the roads. This was the responsibility of two way-wardens and was paid for out of the highway rate.
- (3) Poor relief was paid for out of the poor rate. After 1835 when the Havant Union was created, which comprised of the parishes of Havant, Warblington, Bedhampton, Farlington, North Hayling and South Hayling, the Vestry's role was mainly confined to appointing three of the ten guardians who ran the Havant Union Workhouse.
- (4) Law and order. From 1842 seven parish constables were appointed and paid for out of a special rate of 4d. (2p) in the pound. Previously constables had been appointed by the Manorial Leet Court.

The Havant Vestry – at least in the period covered by the surviving records – does not seem to have been a particularly active body. They met infrequently; rarely more than five or six times a year and just once in both 1840 and 1841. Attendance, moreover, was usually sparse. Havant was an 'open' Vestry, which meant that all ratepayers in the parish could participate, but in the vast majority of cases fewer than a dozen people turned up to meetings, and often no more than four or five were present. The most frequent attenders were John Bridger Clarke, Samuel Clark (of Stockheath, not JB Clarke's son Samuel who was to figure so prominently in Havant's affairs later in the century) David Coldwell, GA Shawe and James Moore. Apart from their core duties the Vestry did very little, and the only substantial piece of improvement they undertook was the creation of the New Lane cemetery, which opened in 1851.

Local Board of Health

In 1848 the Public Health Act was passed which created a General Board of Health in London and permitted parishes to set up their own Local Boards of Health, with powers to inspect and control 'nuisances', pave and light the streets and provide mains water supply and drainage. Over the next few years Board of Health Inspectors travelled all over the country to examine the feasibility of parishes establishing Local Boards of Health, and on the 22 October 1851 one of them, Robert Rawlinson, arrived in Havant. His report, published a few weeks later, was strongly in favour of a Local Board of Health being set up, and of a comprehensive water supply and mains drainage scheme (using the abundant local springs) being carried out.

Local opposition to the report was fierce, mainly on the grounds of cost and loss of local autonomy, since each Local Board of Health was ultimately answerable to the General Board of Health in London. However the Public Health Act stipulated that a Board of Health could be established if just ten per cent of ratepayers signed a petition in favour of one, and this is what must have happened in Havant, for in April 1852 it was announced in the press that the first elections for the Local Board of Health would take place in May. The board was to have 12 members, who had to be resident within seven miles of the parish and own property worth at least £500 or with a rateable value of £115 per annum. All ratepayers were entitled to vote, but not on the basis of one person one vote. Anyone with property worth less than £50 got a single vote; property worth £50

to £100 entitled you to two votes; £100 to £150 three votes; £150 to £200 four votes; £200 to £250 five votes and over £250 six votes.

The first board, which held its inaugural meeting on 3 June 1852, contained several people who had been prominent in the old Vestry, and some, like JBClarke and John Bulbeck, who had been amongst the most vehement opponents of a Board of Health being established in the first place. They appointed a clerk (CJ Longcroft), a collector of rates (John Pullinger) and formed a committee to undertake a comprehensive survey of 'nuisances'.

At first the board seems to have been remarkably enthusiastic. They paved, guttered and lit the streets (the Havant Gas Company had also been established in 1852) and even drew up ambitious plans for a mains water supply and drainage scheme, costing £13,000, just as Rawlinson had recommended. In 1853, however, this was quietly abandoned, and it wasn't long before the board settled into a comfortable *laissez-faire* existence, undertaking only the most modest improvements and removing only the most serious nuisances – these mainly arising from the abundant human, animal and industrial waste which beset the town. Nor was there much democracy. In theory there should have been annual elections since each year one third of board members were obliged to retire and seek re-election if they wanted to serve another three-year term. However after 1852 there seems to have been no election held for almost another 30 years, presumably because there were never more candidates than there were vacancies. Retiring members who wished to continue were returned unopposed, whilst those who stood down or died were merely replaced by the nominees of existing board members.

This obviously could lead to complacency, and by the late 1870s there must have been a growing feeling that the board had become little more than a self-serving clique comprising the most powerful men in the town (like the brewer and maltster Samuel Clarke and the tanner Francis Foster) and their cronies. This may have been unfair, but the fact that, despite mounting pressure, the board resolutely continued to exclude both press and public from their meetings only fuelled suspicions. Matters came to a head early in 1879 when the Lavant Stream flooded the town for the second time in three years and the board was widely blamed for failing to ensure that the river channel had been properly maintained. (In 1875 it had officially become the Urban Sanitary Authority but everyone continued to use the old name.) So, probably for the first time since 1852, a local election was held in Havant, with eight candidates contesting five

vacancies. This marks the start of a comparatively vigorous period of local politics, with elections held every year between 1879 and 1885 and most years thereafter.

Despite the optimism of one letter writer to the *Hampshire Telegraph* in April 1881 who was certain that: *At last old fogeyism and elitism are trembling in their shoes*, the old guard, led by Samuel Clarke, remained by and large in charge. But things were changing. Extensive improvements to and culverting of the Lavant Stream in North Street and Elm Lane were undertaken in 1879 and 1887. The recreation ground was laid out in 1890 and, at last, in 1887, the press were permitted to report on the board's deliberations. On the other hand they attracted considerable criticism in 1883 for their stubborn refusal to support a drainage scheme proposed by the Portsmouth Water Company designed to protect the purity of its supplies from the Brockhampton springs. *We simply ask to be left alone* was Clarke's response to it.

Indeed the failure to do anything about sanitation was probably the board's greatest defect, and by the time it was transformed into the urban district council in 1894 Havant was still without mains drainage. This was not to arrive until 1909.



Main drainage being installed in North Street.

HEALTH OF TOWNS ACT.

HAVANT.

At a numerously attended Meeting of the Ratepayers of the Parish of Havant, held at the Black Dog Inn, on Monday, the 12th of January, 1852, in pursuance of public notice, to take into consideration the Report of Robert Rawlinson, Esquire, to the Board of Health respecting the Sanitary state of the Parish of Havant, and to assent to, or dissent From, the adoption of the Recommendation of that Gentleman, That the Public Health Act [1848] may be applied to the Parish and Town of Havant.

SIR H J. LEEKE in the Chair.

The Report of Mr. Rawlinson was read, together with the Notification at the Head of the Report, that on or before the 26th Instant, written, statements might be forwarded to the Board of Health with respect to any matter contained in or omitted from each Report

It was proposed by Mr. LONGCROFT, seconded by Mr. BULBECK and resolved unanimously-

That in the opinion of this Meeting it is inexpedient that the Health of Towns Act should be applied to the Parish and Town of Havant, for the following reasons—

That although the population of the Parish of Havant is 2,416, yet the population of the Town is not more than 1,800, the difference being made up from the Hamlets of Redhill, Durrants, East, West, and Middle Leigh, Stockheath, Brockhampton, and Langstone, as shewn in the Map accompanying the Report.

The town and parish of Havant has always been considered a most healthy place and within the memory of the oldest Inhabitant, no Epidemic, or other Disease of a general character has existed That therein.

That during the visitations of the Cholera some years ago, and in the year 1819, not a single case appeared within the parish, although the adjoining

parishes of Warblington and Westbourne were visited with several cases, some of which were fatal.

That the parishioners are generally well supplied with good water, almost every house in the town having a pump or well, and those few who have not, are situated near the public pumps or springs, and are supplied therefrom, and in proof of the abundant supply of water in the parish, an Act is intended to be applied for in the next Sessions of Parliament for supplying Portsmouth with water from the springs at Havant.

That the stagnant refuse in the Lavant Course and Potash Ditch complained of in the report, can easily be cleansed once a week by penning the water at Mr. Clarke's Spring for twenty-four hours, and thereby flooding the course and ditch.

That by the erection of a few extra pumps the side channels of the Streets may always be kept perfectly clean.

That the Inhabitants and Ratepayers have every disposition to improve the condition of the Town where it can be done at a moderate expence. and for that purpose it is intended at the Annual Vestry Meeting of the Parishioners in March next, to take the same into consideration, hut having recently born considerable expences in Repairing and Paving the Tows; in the Erection of a Cemetery, and in the Purchase of a Field for the use of the Inmates of the Workhouse, they feel themselves ill able to bear the heavy Expences consequent upon the Parish and Town being placed under the Public Health Act.

It was proposed by Mr. J. B. CLARKE, seconded by Mr. FOSTER and resolved unanimously—

That the Proceedings of this Meeting be copied; signed by the Chairman, and by as many of the Ratepayers (whether present at this Meeting or not) as may approve thereof. And that previous to the 26th Inst; the same be forwarded to the General Board of Health with an earnest request that the Public Health Act may not be applied to the Parish and Town of Havant.

(signed) Leeke, Chairman

Walter Scott, Printer.

Mains Drainage Comes – at Last – to Havant

Robert West

Mains drainage arrived in Havant in 1908, but the idea had first been proposed nearly 60 years earlier.

On October 21st 1851 Robert Rawlinson, an official from the recently-established General Board of Health, came to inspect the town and his report *A Preliminary Inquiry into the Sewerage, Drainage, and Supply of Water and the Sanitary Condition of the Town of Havant*, was published early in 1852.

Rawlinson was not impressed by what he found and recommended the installation not only of mains drainage but also mains water (both to be connected to every house in the parish) as well as mains gas and a comprehensive scheme of street lighting, paving and guttering, all to be undertaken by a local Board of Health, which would replace the Vestry as the town's local government authority. Havant, he said, was eminently suited to provide mains water and drainage because of its copious springs – less than one per cent of their output would amply satisfy all foreseeable needs – and the cost of establishing a waterworks would be minimal. Indeed he calculated that to implement all his proposals would cost each household a maximum of five shillings (25 pence) per year.

Despite this optimistic scenario Rawlinson's report was not well received and a meeting of those most implacably opposed to its recommendations was held on January 12th 1852 at the Black Dog Inn in West Street. It was attended by about 70 of what the *Portsmouth Times and Naval Gazette* described as *the most influential gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood*. In their opinion a Board of Health would be a monstrous imposition, whilst mains water was unnecessary because pure spring water was so abundant and easily collected for free. Moreover, whilst they conceded that there were problems with the disposal of waste, and that the watercourses were polluted, they insisted that:

The town of Havant has always been considered a most healthy place and within in the memory of the oldest inhabitant no disease or epidemic of a general character has existed there and hence mains drainage was an expensive luxury.

Nevertheless just three months later a Havant Board of Health was formed. This was because all that was required to establish one was a petition signed by a mere 10

per cent of ratepayers, which in Havant's case could scarcely have amounted to more than a handful of people. The first election of members took place in May and its first meeting was held on 3 June 1852.

Fired with enthusiasm the new Board at once drew up plans for a comprehensive mains water and drainage scheme, and even agreed to borrow £13,000 to pay for it. (The largest sum of money the old Vestry had ever spent on anything was just over £400). But whilst in other respects the Board went a long way to implementing Rawlinson's ideas – gas mains were laid, street lighting installed and extensive paving and guttering was carried out – the water and drainage schemes were quietly abandoned in June 1853 and nothing more was heard of them.

But Rawlinson's concerns about the insanitary state of the town were fully justified. Human waste was (or at least was supposed to be) drained into cesspits, but all waste water - not only domestic but also that from industries such as brewing, malting, tanning and parchment-making - eventually found its way into the Lavant and Brockhampton streams. This was bad enough, but after 1860 it became especially serious when the Portsmouth Water Company built its waterworks in Brockhampton Road and used the Brockhampton springs – with the foul Brockhampton stream running close by – for their supply. At first Havant was not part of the Company's supply area, but even when mains water arrived in 1873 the prospect of having their own supply contaminated by their own pollution failed to prompt the Havant authorities into reviving their drainage plans. Indeed not only did they refuse to do anything about the matter themselves, they always vigorously opposed any measures taken by the Portsmouth Water Company to protect the purity of their springs.

When the company opened a second waterworks at Bedhampton in 1889 exactly the same problems were encountered, for here the springs were right next to the Hermitage stream, which received all manner of waste deposited into its headwaters at Waterlooville as well as at Stockheath and the west end of Havant. The Company eventually tried to solve the problem by constructing a diversion pipe, which conveyed the stream underground from the point where it flows under the Havant to Portsmouth railway line to its outfall in Langstone Harbour, and this was completed in 1897. But shortly before work on it commenced a seemingly trivial event took place which was to have momentous consequences.

Sometime in the autumn of 1895 two army officers garrisoned at Hilsea Barracks – Major Maycock and Surgeon-Major Porter – decided to undertake their own private investigation of the springs and streams in the Havant area. So appalled were they at

what they found that they decided to inform their superiors at the War Office who, in turn, passed on their concerns to the Local Government Board, and they considered the matter sufficiently serious to send down one of their most senior public health experts, Dr Theodore Thomson, to fully investigate the matter in March 1897.

Thomson's report – *The Conditions Topographical, Geographical, and Sanitary of the Havant Districts (Urban and Rural) and their Relation with the Sources of the Borough of Portsmouth Company's Water Supply*, was published on 14 October 1897 and made for uncomfortable reading. At the Brockhampton springs, for example, Thomson observed that:

The houses in West Street near the springs have defective cesspits or in some cases no drainage at all. There are also washings from the chamois leather works [in Brockhampton Lane] and pollution from the tannery on the south side. As may be gathered from the description of various matters that gain access to the stream its waters in the neighbourhood of the water works are greatly befouled.

The situation with the Hermitage stream at Bedhampton was equally dire, although as by now the diversion pipe was almost complete Thomson was confident that this would solve the problem. [Unfortunately it didn't for the pipe was far too small and could not cope with the flow after heavy rain, leading to extensive flooding and the occasional inundation of the springs.]

Exactly what the impact of the Thomson report would have been in normal times is difficult to say – after all a similar one published in 1886 had gone almost unnoticed. But October 1897 was not a normal time, for it was at the height of the Maidstone typhoid epidemic, the most serious outbreak of the disease in Britain in the entire 19th century. It had begun in August, and by the time it finally abated in January 1898 there had been 1910 reported cases and 123 fatalities. But the worst week of all – with 262 cases and 123 fatalities – was the very week in which the Thomson Report was published. And the cause of the outbreak? Pollution of the Maidstone Water Company's springs [which, like those of the Portsmouth Water Company had always been renowned for their purity] by sewage leaking into them from a temporary hop-pickers camp which had been set up nearby. The parallels with the situation at Havant could not have been closer or more alarming.

The Thomson report, therefore, caused a sensation. The *Portsmouth Evening News* decided to print it in full in five instalments over five consecutive issues from 5 November onwards and declared in one of its editorials that:

The grave character of the report cannot be disregarded and it is evident that the most important works will have to be undertaken without delay in order that the purity of the water may be maintained.

Even more alarmed by Thomson's findings were Portsmouth Borough Council and especially their Medical Officer of Health Dr Mearns Fraser. On 2 November the council held a special meeting to debate the report, as well as a separate one drawn up by their own Sanitary and Drainage Committee. The mood was febrile. One councillor declared that *they were living on the edge of a volcano*, another that *the people of Portsmouth were living in a Fool's Paradise* and that the report had come as a *thunderbolt*; whilst a third was of the opinion that *whilst reports were being compiled and debates conducted possibly thousands of our fellow townsmen are being poisoned*.

Whilst most of the criticism was levelled at the Havant authorities the Portsmouth Water Company by no means escaped censure, for it had long been unpopular. Despite healthy annual profits and generous dividends to shareholders the quality of its service often left much to be desired and its rates were deemed to be excessive. A growing number of councillors were in favour of running it as a municipally-owned utility.

Not everyone, however, was so concerned. The *Portsmouth Times and Naval Gazette*, for example, declared that *an attempt is being made to create a scare by the publication of the report* and was dismissive of *the hypothetical dangers hinted at*, whilst the Havant Urban District Council scarcely debated the matter at all and simply referred Thomson's report to their Sanitary Committee to consider *if necessary*.

The Portsmouth Water Company, however, did respond. In November it bought up nine properties in the vicinity of the Brockhampton Waterworks with the intention of demolishing them, and announced £45,000 of further investment to safeguard the springs. Then, in December, it made a formal complaint to the Local Government Board that both the Havant Urban and Rural District Councils *have made default in providing sufficient sewers*. This was a very telling move because it triggered a full-scale Local Government Board Inquiry, with legal representation for all parties and the power to call and cross-examine witnesses. In effect the Havant authorities were being put on trial.

The inquiry, which was held at the Urban District Council offices in West Street, opened on 14 December 1898, with Mr MacMorran QC and Mr Willes Chitty

representing the Portsmouth Water Company and Mr Radcliffe representing the Havant Urban District Council.

Mr MacMorran opened the case for the Portsmouth Water Company by drawing attention to the insanitary state of Havant as outlined in the Thomson Report and outlining all the steps that the water company had taken over the years to protect their springs. He then called a string of witnesses. Mr William Corfield MD, an expert in public health, declared the state of Havant to be insanitary and a drainage system an absolute necessity; Mr Baldwin Latham, a civil engineer, estimated that a comprehensive drainage scheme would cost no more than £12,000; Joseph Quick, Consulting Engineer to the Portsmouth Water Company, insisted that *he had never been able to obtain any scheme of drainage from the Havant authorities*, whilst Mr H R Smith, Resident Engineer to the Portsmouth Water Company, stated that *speaking from a sanitary point of view words failed him to describe the abominable state of Havant*.

At this point the Inquiry was adjourned, but when it resumed on 23 December yet more witnesses for the water company were summoned. Mr W H Bailey, another of the company's engineers said that the Brockhampton stream was *in a very foul state and had been worse of late years* at times it was *very offensive and skins [from the tannery] were often placed in it in a condition just as they came from the slaughterhouse* whilst William Humphries, the company's water inspector, claimed that out of the 557 houses in Havant less than half (275) actually had cesspits. The water company's case concluded, however, on a lighter note when Miss Shaw of Southbrook was called to testify to the foul state of the Lavant stream which ran past the bottom of her garden and declared that *she had kept Aylesbury ducks upon it, but people refused to eat them*, which was greeted with loud laughter.

The Urban District Council, by contrast, called no witnesses of its own and relied solely upon Mr Radcliffe's cross-examination of the water company's witnesses and his closing address to the inquiry. Radcliffe (who was paid a fee of 70 guineas (£73.50) for his two day's work) did his best to play a very weak hand. He claimed that it was the duty of the water company *who were not invited into the town* to protect their own springs, and that it was *extremely unjust* to expect Havant's ratepayers to contribute anything towards this. The present state of drainage was, he argued *if thoroughly carried out and properly administered.... the very best system they could possibly have* and even claimed that Havant had a prescriptive (i.e. customary) right to pollute the streams which dated back to at least 1856. Finally, he urged the inquiry

not to force a drainage scheme upon Havant *and thus bring it perilously near the borrowing limit and provide an everlasting burden on the town.*

But the Inquiry could really have only one outcome. In April 1899 the Local Government Board wrote to the Urban District Council, upholding the water company's complaint and giving them six months to come up with plans for a comprehensive drainage scheme.

Faced with little alternative the Council at last decided to act, and by September had complied with the Local Government Board's demands. Three months later a Drainage Committee was formed and by April 1900 arrangements had been made to borrow £17,000 to finance the scheme and an 11 acre plot of land had been purchased for a sewage works.

The fact that it was to be eight more years before Havant finally got its mains drainage was not, however, entirely the council's fault, for they found themselves caught up in a bureaucratic labyrinth which involved having to deal with at least seven different bodies – the Portsmouth Water Company, Portsmouth Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, the Local Government Board, the War Office, the Admiralty and the Board of Trade.

These last two were especially concerned with the problem of sewage disposal. The plan was to take the treated sewage from the sewage works (which stood on the site now occupied by the Langstone Technology Park) through an outfall pipe and deposit it in Langstone Harbour. But the Admiralty, who had responsibility for the state of all tidal waters, were particularly exercised over this matter, and the Council became embroiled with them in what was described as early as October 1901 as *voluminous correspondence* which continued for at least another five years.

Southern Sea Fisheries, a department of the Board of Trade, were also concerned about the impact of sewage discharge on marine life, and this became an especially sensitive topic following events at Emsworth.

In November 1902 an outbreak of illness after a banquet at Winchester [which resulted in the death of the Dean of Winchester] was traced to Emsworth oysters which had become contaminated by the discharge of raw sewage close to the oyster beds. The result was the collapse of the Emsworth oyster industry and a bitter legal wrangle over compensation which dragged on until 1906. As a consequence the Board of Trade were particularly anxious to ensure that such an event could never be repeated at Havant.

Another delay was caused by the need to re-adjust the local government boundaries. The drainage scheme was to be carried out entirely by the Urban District Council who proposed to charge its ratepayers a drainage rate (fixed initially at 1s. (5p) in the pound). But the Urban District – essentially the old Havant parish - had a rather peculiar shape, being much longer north to south than east to west; indeed at its narrowest point, in Havant town itself, it was barely half a mile wide. Moreover at the western end the boundary actually ran along the middle of West Street from what is now Boundary Way to the Hermitage Stream bridge which meant that here the southern side of West Street was in the Urban District but the northern side was in Bedhampton and so part of the Rural District. Thus large parts of the Urban District, particularly Durrants and Redhill in the north, were never going to get mains drainage, and these two areas successfully petitioned the Local Government Board to be transferred into the Rural District. All of West Street, however, was going to be part of the drainage scheme, so here it was agreed to push the boundary of the Urban District westward as far as Hermitage Bridge.

There was a further adjustment to the east with the incorporation of Denvilles into the Urban District. The Denvilles estate had been laid out in the 1880s as a prosperous middle class development of detached and semi-detached villas. But it had been without even mains water until 1894 and by 1900 its inhabitants were more than willing to quit the Rural District of Warblington and become part of the Urban District if this meant that they could also acquire mains drainage.

By March 1906 all these issues were finally resolved and the Council were at last able to put out for tender for the work of laying the drainage pipes. That of R H W Neal Ltd of Plymouth, at £11,997, was eventually accepted and work started in October. It was done by gangs of navvies for whom the Council agreed to provide a Reading Room at Potash (now the site of the car park for Aldi, Wickes and other stores).

By November 1907 the mains had been laid, the sewage works had been built and properties were ready to be connected.

This task, however, took a further two years to complete, hindered by the fact that not everyone seemed to be convinced of the benefits of modern sanitation. Objectors included some very prominent Havant citizens, at least two of whom actually sat on the Council. One was Canon Scott, the Rector of Havant, who in September 1908 wrote to his fellow Council members stating that:

He did not propose to comply with the notice served upon him to connect with the main sewer as he had expended a large sum of money for the draining of his property into a cesspool.

Another was William Scorer, the photographer, who only reluctantly agreed to be connected when threatened with legal action and did his best to thwart the progress of the drainage scheme until he was voted off the council in 1910. Miss Hodgkinson of Elmleigh, the first female member of the Havant Board of Poor Law Guardians, also wrote to the Council in January 1909 stating firmly that *she did not propose to connect her house to the main sewer.*

But the objectors were fighting a losing battle. At the end of September 1909 the emptying of all cesspits in the Urban District was discontinued and over the course of the next few years the original drainage scheme was not only completed, it was actually extended.

By the outbreak of the First World War Havant was at last a properly drained town.

Dr Edward Bayley, a physician, who formerly lived at Havant, gives the following account of an earthquake, which was noticed here 25 October 1734:

Between three and four o'clock in the morning an earthquake was felt here; the shock was so considerable as to be observed by one or more in most houses of the town. I happened to be awake at that time and perceive the bed shake under me, with a quick, tremulous motion, which continued about two or three minutes; then ceased, and after a very short intermission was repeated in the same manner, and lasted about the same space of time. I was at first much surprized at such an unusual phenomenon, but upon a little recollection concluded it must be an earthquake, and was soon confirmed in my conjecture by the concurrent observations of my neighbours, and afterwards by accounts of the same sort from many other places, in some of which it seems to have been more violent than here. Several persons in this place say they not only perceived the shaking of their beds, but also the rocking of their houses, together with a rumbling noise of drawers and the like moveable goods in their chambers and other rooms. I am strongly inclined to think the progressive motion of this earthquake to have been from East to West, because it appears from the best accounts I have yet had of it, that it was observed earlier East than Westward, and likewise extended further from East to West, than North to South. It may not be amiss to take notice of some remarkable phenomena which happened before and after, as well as some circumstances which immediately attended this earthquake, most of them agreeing with those signs which have been observed by the learned to precede or accompany former earthquakes, in those and other parts of the world. It is observable, that we have had of late more rain and wind for several months successively, than for many years past, especially from the beginning to the middle of this month, about which time it cleared up, as the weather suddenly became very cold, with frosty mornings, the wind blowing generally pretty hard from North-West. On Wednesday, the 23rd, the cold abated considerably; it was cloudy, but we had no rain that day. The 24th was very calm, with rain most part of the afternoon, though the mercury stood at 30.2; it continued very calm all night, and rained hard for some time before and after the earthquake happened, but it soon cleared up and we had a strong gale of wind, which rose within half-an-hour, afterwards it continued blowing hard all the forenoon. At four in the morning I observed the mercury continued at 30.2 the spirit of wine at 55.5, having risen about five degrees since the last cold weather.

From Arundell, Jan. 9,

Copy of a Letter from Sir W. Waller to the Lieutenant

General, the Earl of Essex, Jan. 6, 1644.

" MY LORD,

On Thursday the enemy sent a drummer to me, with a letter signifying their willingness to surrender the Castle, if they might have honourable conditions. I returned answer, that, when I first possessed myself of the town, I summoned them in the Castle to yield upon fair quarter: but they were pleased to refuse either to give or take quarter. I now took them at their word, and bid them yield to mercy. That night I heard no more of them; but the next morning the drummer came to me again with another letter, wherein they disavowed that answer to my trumpet, laying the blame upon one (who they say had no more soldiery than civility) that without their assent or knowledge had given that language. I sent them answer that I was very well satisfied that, in this disavowing that harshness, they had made room for courtesy, and that I was contented to give them fair quarter, and that, according to their desire, formerly expressed, if they would send out to me two officers of quality, I would employ two of equal condition to treat with them about the particulars of the surrender. Within a short time after, there came out unto me Colonel Bamfield and Major Bodvil, who pressed very much that they might have liberty to march away like soldiers, otherwise they would choose death rather than life, and so broke off. About two hours after, they sent out unto me Lieutenant Colonel Rawlins and Major Moulin, who, after some debate, came to an agreement with me, that this morning they would deliver the Castle into my hands by ten of the clock, with colours and arms undefaced and unspoiled; and that the Gentlemen and officers should have fair quarter and civil usage, and the ordinary soldiers quarter. For the performance of these covenants, Sir Edward Ford and Sir Edward Bishop were immediately to be yielded to me, which was accordingly done.

This morning we entered, and are now, blessed be God, in possession of that place. We have taken seventeen colours of foot, and two of horse, and one thousand prisoners, one with another, besides one hundred and sixty which we took at the first entering of the town, and such as came from the enemy to us during the siege. I humbly desire the London regiments may be sent hither to secure this important place, while I advance with what strength I have towards the enemy, who lie still at Havant. I humbly rest

Your Excellency's most humble servant,

WILLIAM WALLER. ""

PROCLAMATION OF THE KING AT HAVANT ON THE 15th FEBRUARY 1820

The morning was ushered in by the ringing of bells, flags displayed from the tower, and every demonstration of loyalty:-

At twelve o'clock, the inhabitants assembled at the Bear Inn, and formed the following procession:-

A Gentleman on horseback. Constables and Tythingmen, with staves. Band of Music. Old Volunteer Standard. Churchwardens, with white wands. Town Crier. Lord of the Manor, accompanied by the Clergymen of the Parish, supported by Parish Officers, with wands. New Volunteer Standards. Twelve Gentlemen who were present at the Proclamation of George III. The remainder of the procession, consisting of the inhabitants of Havant.

In this order, the procession, decorated with laurel, moved to the East End of the town, when the Crier proclaimed silence, while the Steward of the Manor, on behalf of Sir George Thomas Staunton, Bart., Lord of the Manor of Havant: should proclaim the accession of His Majesty, King George IV to the throne of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

The proclamation being there made by the Steward, the air resounded with God save the King, and loud and hearty cheering, the band striking up a national air; the procession then moved onto the West End of the town, when the second proclamation was made as before; the third upon the bridge; and the fourth and last at the Market Cross, with the like formalities.

A great number of oranges were next thrown among the crowd, and in the afternoon the populace were regaled with strong beer to drink the new King's health, the liberal donation of Sir George Thomas Staunton, Bart; in the evening a very large party of Gentlemen of Havant and the neighbourhood assembled at the Bear Inn, when several beautiful national airs were played by the band, with great harmony and effect, several

excellent constitutional songs and glees were sung, and the following appropriate toasts were drunk:-

The King - God save the King, verse and chorus, company standing.

The Duke of York and the rest of the Royal Family - tune, Duke of York's March.

Duke of Wellington and the Army - tune, see the conquering Hero comes.

The Wooden Walls of Old England and its brave supporters - tune, Rule Britannia.

Respectability of the Crown, durability of the Constitution and Prosperity of the People - tune, O the Roast Beef of Old England.

Sir George Thomas Staunton, Bart., Lord of the Manor - three cheers.

Prosperity to the Loyal Town of Havant - three cheers.

May our trade increase, and be supported by Unity, Peace, and Concord.

May the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland be for ever distinguished by Loyalty and Patriotism.

May the virtuous example of George III be never forgotten by succeeding Monarchs.

May honesty, as well as Policy, attend of the Government of our Country.

Success in the industrious Yeomanry of England, and may they profit by their industry.

May the seeds of dissention never find growth in the soil of Great Britain.

May the bright sun of prosperity ever shine on our native Isles.

Hampshire Telegraph, 28th February 1820



ORDER OF PROCESSION

FOR PROCLAIMING

Her Majesty Queen Victoria,

ON TUESDAY, JUNE 27th, 1837.

Constables and Tythingmen, with Staves

BAND OF MUSIC

OLD VOLUNTEER STANDARD

CHURCHWARDENS WITH WHITE WANDS

TOWN CRIER

STEWARD OF THE MANOR AND MINISTER

PARISH OFFICERS WITH WHITE WANDS

NEW VOLUNTEER STANDARDS

Gentlemen of Havant and Neighbourhood

REMAINDER OF THE PROCESSION CONSISTING OF INHABITANTS, &c.

To assemble at the Black Dog Inn, at six o'clock---proceed to the Centre of the Town---Proclamation being read, Cryer proclaim "God save the Queen"---a flourish of trumpets, three cheers, Band playing "God save the Queen."

Proclamation will be made in the East and West Streets in the same manner.

A Meeting of the Inhabitants will take place after the Proclamation, at the Black Dog Inn, to celebrate the Event---The Band of Music attending.

ADAMS, PRINTER, HAVANT.

THE HAVANT ELECTION "RIOT" OF 1837

On August 12th 1837 the *Hampshire Advertiser* published the following letter from a correspondent who simply signed himself 'A Citizen of the World':

Sir, I have been at Donnybrook Fair and witnessed an Irish election; I saw the coal miners of Newton Wellow and Foscot in 1802 rise in rebellion, take possession of the old bridge in Bath and sack the house of Quaker Thomas, the baker in Cheap-street of that city; I was mingled in the mass which assailed the schnap stores of Flushing when we took that place in 1809; I have many a time been a spectator of the fearful and stiletto brawls of the Rua de Mestres in Lisbon when the Tagus has contained a thousand ships; and I was in the Rue du Fauborg, Montmatre, and the Port Saint Martin in Paris, in the affair of Fleschi; but, sir, of all the villainous conduct and savage demonstrations it has been my lot to witness, I do not hesitate to say that the conduct of the mob at Havant where I had the misfortune to be a spectator on Friday last (4th) was the most vile and determinedly ferocious. I grieve at the conviction that some, at least, of my countrymen can in blackguardism, beat hollow the refuse population of the two most iniquitous capitals of Europe.

What he had witnessed was the unrest on polling day for the General Election which had been called following the death of King William IV a few weeks earlier.

HAVANT RURAL SANITARY AUTHORITY.

NOTICE,

The Havant Rural Sanitary Authority are prepared to receive

TENDERS

the Supply and Delivery on or before the end of next June, of 1730 CUBIC YARDS of
CLEAN HAND-PICKED

FIELD STONES

For the Repair of the Highways of their District. The materials to be deposited in Heaps of
20 Yards, squared ready for measurement, at the several places hereunder set forth.

	Cubic yds.	PARISH OF BEDHAMPTON.
	40	Stockheath Lane and New Road leading thereto from Bedhampton level Railway Crossing.
	20	The Old Road.
	60	Between entrance to New Road to Waterloo and Neville's Park.
	40	Between Neville's Park and Bedhampton Boundary.
	40	Near Belmont Towers.
	40	Between Belmont Towers and Farlington Redoubt.
	240	
		PARISH OF FARLINGTON.
	40	That portion of the New Road to Waterloo, between Bedhampton boundary and that of Waterloo Parish.
	20	Chalk Road, Furbrook.
	20	Fir-Copse.
	20	East and West of Fort Furbrook.
	20	Stone Depot East of Fort Furbrook, on the Road to Crookhorn.
	20	Crookhorn Lane.
	40	Crookhorn.
	40	Stakes Road.
	220	
		PARISH OF WARBLINGTON.
	150	Westbourne Corner New Depot.
	100	South Leigh Depot.
	250	
		MAIN ROADS.
		Cosham, Havant and Chichester Section.
	207	Beer-blocks Depot, Havant Road.
	60	Green Pond Lane.
	160	Stone Depot, Near Belmont.
	100	Between Belmont and Old Road end.
	100	End of Old Road and Farlington Mile Stone.
	100	Farlington Mile Stone and Waterworks Lane.
	100	Waterworks Lane and New Inn.
	820	
		Portsmouth and Petersfield Section.
	50	Near Waterlooville.
	100	Plant Farm Lane.
	50	Near Furbrook Arch.
	200	

Tenders stating the rate per Cubic Yard at which the Stones will be supplied and delivered at the several places above-mentioned, to be delivered at my Office, West Street, Havant, on or before Four o'clock on WEDNESDAY NEXT, the 11th March, 1891.

The Authority will not be bound to accept the lowest or any Tender.

Dated this 2nd day of March, 1891.

E. R. LONGCROFT,

Havant Urban District Council. **ELECTION, 1914.**

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

On Monday, April 6th, you will be called upon to elect Four Representatives to serve you on the above Council. At the request of a number of Ratepayers, I have decided to offer myself as one of your Representatives. Having resided in Havant for some years, I claim to know a little of the requirements of the Town, and although much has been done in the past by your faithful Councillors, there still remains, and always will remain, a great deal to be accomplished.

My experience of over forty-five years, on the Farm, in the Building Trade, and in other Industries, has been very varied. If you consider my service of any use to you, I willingly place it at your disposal. I have been asked by some, "If you are elected, what will you do for us?" My answer is this, "The best I can for all."

YOURS FAITHFULLY,

Samuel Fletcher

To the Electors of the
Havant
Urban District Council.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I thank you very heartily for your support at the Poll. You may rely on my earnest effort to serve all alike, and should I be spared to the end of three years to seek re-election I hope you will not have cause to say--turn him out.

Yours obediently,

SAM FLETCHER

"The Laurels,"

Grove Road, Havant.

Brother Rate Payers

A Meeting having been called for the 14th, to take into consideration the propriety of establishing a POLICE FORCE In this Village, I cannot let it pass without addressing a few words to you on so important a subject.,

This Police Force, if introduced, will cost about Two Hundred Pounds per annum, besides the first outlay for a Station House, Clothing,

Cutlasses, Pistols, & Ammunition.

How is this sum to be raised? By a Rate to be levied on you: which Rate will amount to about the same as the Poor Rate you now pay.

Rate Payers! Are you prepared to pay double the Rates you at present pay? If you are, would you not prefer paying it for the relief of the aged and infirm, the widow and the orphan, the poor man with a large family? Rate Payers! If society is in such a state in this hitherto peaceful village that we require an

Armed Body of Police,

let us inquire into the cause that has led to this unhappy state of things, and see if we cannot find a remedy. Rate Payers! It is the NEW POOR LAW that is destroying the Bonds of Society. Give the Labouring Classes work, and pay them for their work, and the Rich will no longer have occasion to call In an Armed Body of Police to protect themselves and property from their poorer neighbours.

Then let us adopt the words of the immortal Nelson, "*England expects every man to do his duty.*" Emsworth expects every Rate Payer to do his duty, and attend at this Meeting on the 14th, to vote against the introduction of an Armed Body of Police into this hitherto quiet village.

A Rate Payer

Emsworth, November 8, 1838.
H ACKMAN, PRINTER, CHICHESTER

HAVANT LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

VOTING PAPER.

District of HAVANT.

No. of Voting Paper.	Name and Address of Voter.	No. of Votes.	
		As Owner.	As Ratepayer.
	HAVANT.		

Initials of the Voter against the Names of the Persons for whom he intends to vote.	Names of Persons Nominated.	Residence of the Persons Nominated.	Quality or Calling of the Persons Nominated.	Name of the Nominator or of one of the Nominators.	Address of such Nominators.
	CHIGNELL, Alfred	West Street, Havant	Registered Dentist	Sir F. W. FitzWygram, Bart.	Leigh Park, Havant
	FLETCHER, William	St. Hilda, Langstone Road, Havant	Corset Manufacturer	William Scorer	North Street, Havant
	FOSTER, Francis George	Brockhampton, Havant	Tanner	Thomas Hilton	Yew Lodge, West Street, Havant
	JERAM, George	Elm Villa, West End, Havant	Gentleman	Thomas Hilton	Yew Lodge, West Street, Havant
	SOFTLY, James	Havant	Farmer	Thomas Hilton	Yew Lodge, West Street, Havant
	STENT, Alfred	West Street, Havant	Woolstapler	Thomas Hilton	Yew Lodge, West Street, Havant

I vote for the persons in the above list against whose names my initials are placed.

Signed _____

or the mark of _____

Witness to the mark _____

or _____ proxy for _____

DIRECTIONS TO THE VOTER.

The Voter must write his initials against the name of every person for whom he votes, and must subscribe his name and address at full length.

If the voter cannot write he must make his mark instead of initials, but such mark must be attested by a witness, and such witness must write the initials of the voter against the name of every person for whom the voter intends to vote.

If a proxy votes he must in like manner write his initials subscribe his own name and address and add after his signature the name of the body of persons for whom he is proxy.

This paper will be collected on the 4th day of April, 1893, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

The number of persons to be elected is FIVE.

[SUTER, PRINTER, HAVANT.]

Ballot paper for 1893. Note the voter had to record their name and address.



Bill New with Havant & Waterloo Urban District Council's first lorry, a Thornycroft.



Havant Council's Wallis and Stevens steam roller. Bill New, holding the broom, said that he had walked backwards down every street in Havant spraying hot tar on to which granite chippings were spread and rolled.

Havant Town Hall

Over a 100 years ago a group of public-spirited townsfolk of Havant formed a company of shareholders to build a town hall. (This was not to be a civic Town Hall but a town hall for recreation purposes.) On 22 October 1868 The Havant Town Hall Company (Limited) was registered with WH Stone Esq. MP of Leigh Park as Chairman, and a board of 12 directors with Mr CJ Longcroft as solicitor. The capital was £2,000 in shares of £5, and towards this capital Mr Stone contributed an amount of £500.

Havant, in common with many small busy market towns, held a great variety of public and social gatherings within its own community most of which took place at the local inns.

In 1869 the newly-formed Town Hall Company purchased for £150 a plot of land, part of the large East Town's End Field, owned by Mr Richard Scott, situated at the corner of The Retreat (now Town Hall Road) and the turnpike road (now East Street). The Hayling Island railway cutting had already been formed in 1860 through a part of this large pasture bordering the eastern boundary.

Without delay, active steps were taken, and Mr Richard Drew of Westminster, the architect of the second Leigh Park house, was engaged to prepare plans of the proposed town hall. Tenders for the building work were invited, and that received from Messrs John and Mark Hillary of Andover for the sum of £1,000, the estimate for extras to the contract being under £100, was accepted. The architect's fees, the cost of the formation of the company, and all other incidental expenses were estimated at £150, with no commission and no promotion fees. The heating apparatus was supplied by Messrs Edwards and Son of Great Marlborough Street, London, at a cost of £76 19s. (£79.95.)

In the following year, 1870, the building of the town hall was completed, at a total cost of £1,500.

The shareholders were much indebted to their chairman, WH Stone Esq. for without his ever ready advice, assistance and liberality, the town hall might never have been built.

To celebrate the opening of the new town hall, which seated 300 persons, with a moveable platform to accommodate 40 performers, a grand opening concert was held on 3 February 1871. A special report appeared in *The Portsmouth Times*, from which the following is an extract:

This usually quiet town on Friday night of last week, presented a gay and animated appearance, for its inhabitants turned out in great numbers and with all the necessary enthusiasm to be present at the above, and filling the whole space devoted to their use in the new and commodious building recently erected, may be truly said to have enjoyed the musical treat so charmingly laid before them. We must congratulate the inhabitants on having public-spirited men among them who saw and provided for the wants of the community, and were the means of erecting the new Town Hall.

In architectural appearance it partakes of pseudo-Gothic, is 85ft (26m) long by 55ft (18m) wide, besides being lofty with gallery at one end and stage capable of accommodating about fifty performers, exclusive of orchestral conveniences, ante-rooms, and an armoury for the Havant Volunteers. The hall is very agreeably warmed and ventilated, and lighted by star-pendants, which will probably be removed to make way for 'sunburners' which are far superior for brilliancy and appearance. The tie-beams of the principals, which are stained and varnished, would seem to obstruct sound, but the form of the roof being of the Veneto Gothic type completely annuls this, and from the experience of the professionals engaged, it is capitally constructed for the purpose. Indeed, we have no hall in Portsmouth so much to be admired in this respect, and it does seem singular that comparing the size and importance of the two places we are all compelled to draw such a comparison. As soon as the walls are dry enough to receive the warm colours that are intended to be laid upon them, this will be one of the most comfortable halls in the county.

The concert given under the patronage of WH Stone Esq. and several others.

Performers - Part of the Portsmouth Choral Society and professional Soloists Miss Susannah Cole, Miss Lizzie Riseam, and Mr William Offord.

Without doubt, it proved to be one of the most comfortable halls in the county, with well-equipped main hall, stage and gallery, kitchen and refreshment rooms, cloakrooms and store, under the management of Mr AH Wood. Its popularity was quickly established; Havant more than held its own in providing amusement for the people. Old inhabitants recalling the early years, talked with enthusiasm of the hall's great variety of uses:

The volunteers had been strong in Havant since their inception in 1863, and most of the leading inhabitants who were eligible, had joined up with 'H' Company, 3rd Volunteer Battalion, Hampshire Regiment, now based at the new town hall, with their armoury at the rear.

Havant's own *The Snowdrops* of 1879 under the leadership of Mr A Chignell, were very popular, each performer had an Italian 'nom-de-stage' and their leader was Signor Chignellini!

The Choral Society's concerts were great social occasions that were enjoyed by everyone, not only the audience who attended the concert, but also by those who gathered outside the hall to watch the arrival of the gentry in evening dress alighting from their carriages. A programme of 1887 states on the front page that: *Carriages May Be Ordered at ten o'clock*.

In 1892 a Gymnasium Club was established; it met twice weekly under the instruction of Mr C Duvall (late Royal Marine Artillery). The president was Sir Frederick Fitzwygram, Bart MP and the Honorary Secretary Mr Thorburn A Stallard.

Between January 1875 and April 1876, the local Lodge of Freemasons, previously meeting at The Black Dog public house, transferred to the town hall during the building of its new headquarters in Waterloo Road.

Local amateur talent of all kinds provided entertainment in abundance, and these events always packed the hall from floor to ceiling!

An early Indenture reveals a long list of activities for which the hall may be hired. It is of interest to note a few of these together with the daily charges:

General Meetings £1, Political Meetings £3 3s. 0d. (£3.15), Property Sales £1 1s. 0d. (£1.05), Public Dinners £2 2s. 0d. (£2.10), Flower Shows (3 days) £4. Bazaars £1 10s. 0d. (£1.50), (preparation on day before 10s. (50p), Concerts and Entertainments £1, Furniture Sales £3 3s. 0d. (£3.15), Gymnasium (1 year) £6, Hire of Small Tearoom when Hall is not already engaged 5s. (25p), Balls: First Class £3 10s. 0d. (£3.50), Second Class £2 10s. 0d. (£2.50), Third Class £2, Arbitrations: Private 10s. (50p), Public £2 2s. 0d. (£2.10). No fees to the attendants.

In 1901, the Havant Town Hall Company Ltd was wound-up, and the town hall purchased for the sum of £1,200 by Sir Frederick Fitzwygram of Leigh Park, a generous benefactor of the people of Havant. After five years of ownership he enlarged and improved the building with additional cloak and ante-rooms.

In 1909 Sir Frederick leased the property to the County of Southampton Territorial Force for a period of seven years at a rental of £52 per annum, for use as a public hall and drill hall. An old inhabitant, a keen territorial, recalled the impressive badge in colours of the 6th Battalion (Duke of Connaught's Own

Hampshire Regiment), on the fascia surrounded by the carved stonework above the main entrance. This remained in position during the tenure of the local territorial force.

An inventory made at this time of the furniture and fittings in the town hall is of much interest. The list of contents of the refreshment room merits attention:

Felt as laid; 3ft 6 inches (1m) mahogany telescopic dining table fitted with two extra leaves; tapestry table cover; seven stained frame balloon back chairs; pardonium (coal scuttle); spark guard; mantel glass; ink stand; four brass curtain rods and six pairs felt curtains.

In 1921 the Havant Urban District Council purchased the town hall upon its being relinquished by the territorial force, and the premises continued in use as a public hall. Before long, a new era was dawning for the rapidly expanding district council; many changes were to take place in Havant and its town hall. On the 1 April 1932 the local authority became the Havant and Waterloo Urban District Council with the town hall premises the centre of administration. From this time the town hall can be truly referred to as the Town Hall.

Sometime before this date, necessary interior structural alterations to the hall to accommodate the various staff departments etc., had been taking place. To mention just a few: part of the main hall became the council chamber (the existing gallery ideal for public attendance); the rear of the building housed rating offices etc. with its own entrance; while outside, the west porch entrance from Town Hall Road was bricked up to provide further office accommodation, (this alteration can be seen clearly from Town Hall Road). The new St Faith's Parish Hall, in Fairfield Road, with excellent hall and stage accommodation, had been built in 1929, and largely replaced the town hall for public use. The county library was first established in the town hall just prior to the beginning of WW2.

Within the next few years, with the expanding administration of the districts 'over the hill', it became evident that the Town Hall was not large enough. So in 1946 the flint and brick private house, Moorlands, which was adjacent to the Town Hall, was purchased from Mr Harry Augustus Collins to provide further offices.

It is of interest to know a little of the history of Moorlands: In 1874 Miss Mary Charge, a member of an old Havant family, purchased a parcel of land with a frontage of 115ft (35m) at a cost of £205, adjoining and to the east of the existing town hall building, then four years old. A house was duly built for Miss Charge on

this land, which she named Lymbourne. An old Havant resident, who knew Miss Charge, recalls that she was very musical, and was in the habit of holding regular musical evenings at her home, often inviting instrumentalists from the band of the Royal Marine Artillery at Eastney. Her house, Lymbourne, had been designed with an unusually large entrance hall, which no doubt served as an ideal music-room, which was also used by the choral society for rehearsals.

Upon Miss Charge's death in 1888 the house passed to Mr W Packham, a well-known and respected Havant resident, who was organist and choirmaster at St Faith's Church and conductor of the Havant Choral Society. In 1904 Mr Packham sold the house to Mrs Mary Elizabeth Moore, who renamed it Moorlands. The house again changed hands in 1911 and was bought by Mr Harry Augustus Collins from whom the council purchased it in 1946.



Moorlands and the Town Hall when used as the civic offices.

The porch at the front entrance bears the date 1920, which appears to be the date of its extension during the ownership of Mr Collins.

An old Havant lady recalls that when she was a child, she went to delightful children's parties at Moorlands, and remembers that (to her) the entrance hall seemed very vast, and that built into one wall was a pipe-organ. One wonders if

this organ (of which there is now no trace) had been installed and played by Mr Packham, the gifted organist who lived there at the turn of the century.

To complete the council offices a two-storey annexe was built between the Town Hall and Moorlands thus connecting all three buildings. The new annexe contained the council committee rooms on the first floor. Later, additional temporary offices were erected in the grounds.

In 1975, after more than a century of service to the people of Havant, their Town Hall became the focal point of an occasion of great historic importance – the first mayor-making ceremony of the new Borough of Havant. This time, as at its inaugural opening in 1870, the hall was packed from floor to ceiling!

But times were changing; before long the new £2½m civic offices in Elmleigh Road superseded the old Town Hall complex, and on 18 April 1977 the new offices were officially opened by the mayor. Thus ended a memorable era of 107 years. In peace and in war, and on occasions grave and joyous, the building had played its part for which Havantonians had reason to be proud.

An extract from the local press, 14 June 1978:

Fanfare for Art. Day of pride for official opening of Havant Arts Centre.

And so the old Town hall enters another era of service to the people of Havant for its buildings are being adapted as an Arts Centre to cover a wide range of drama, music, arts and crafts, exhibitions and other creative activity, and the Moorlands annexe will house the long awaited Museum.



The Spring Arts and Heritage Centre. 2014.

Havant Fire Brigade, 1788-1926

The Market House, which once stood astride South Street, was probably the first place in which any fire-fighting equipment was held. During the 17th and 18th centuries it was the parish's responsibility to supervise the equipment which consisted of ladders, poles with hooks and a fire squirt (a type of hand syringe). These items would have been used to fight the devastating fire in Havant in 1760, which resulted in the destruction of a large portion of the town. As there was no organised fire brigade, the equipment was available for use by any of the townsfolk.

The earliest document that has come to light to prove the existence of a local fire engine is a record of financial assistance of £31 10s. 0d. (£31.50) towards the cost of a fire engine by the Sun Insurance Company in 1788. A Sun Insurance Company fire mark used to be fixed above No 90 West Street. The fire mark, numbered 101668, showed that insurance was taken out by Robert Allen who insured his dwelling, household goods and stock for £200 in 1744. Robert Allen was listed as a 'higler', which was a trader in poultry and rabbit skins in exchange for supplies from local shops.

The 1835 Vestry minutes show that the parish fire engines were to be removed from the premises of Messrs Power, which was a brewery in Homewell, and placed in the church under the custody of the church wardens. In 1838 fire engine No 1 was repaired at a cost of £4 10s. 0d. (£4.50) and two years later the church wardens decided to let Mr Dent keep one fire engine in his yard at the Bear Inn in East Street, and sell the other two engines. Until 1848 the parish paid all repairs but it was decided to defray the engine's expenses by voluntary collections.

In 1852 Police Sergeant Cavell was put in charge of the manual engine, and a notice was placed over the fire station to inform the residents that the keys could be collected from the police station. Sergeant Cavell took the engine out three times in 1854, and was allowed 10s. (50p) to pay assistants for participating in a practise drill. Records show that in 1857 Mr Gloyne ordered parts for the small engines, which indicates Havant once again had two engines. The small engine was probably hand-pulled and the other a Shand Mason – this type of horse drawn manual pump was to be used in Havant for the next 75 years.

At this time the fire engine house was rented from various people in the town, and one of these was Miss Longcroft, who received £2 a year for the rent of a fire

engine store. This store is thought to have been down an alley next to No 10 South Street.

The most important date for the fire service came in 1871 when the Havant Volunteer Fire Brigade was formed. The Local Board of Health delegated its powers to the brigade and paid the necessary expenses. This dual responsibility between the board and the brigade was to cause many problems later. Repairs were made on the old manual engine and a year later a new one was bought by public subscription.

The first captain of the fire brigade was recorded as G Stallard in 1874, and the brigade consisted of 23 men. The fire station was sited in Mr Batchelor's store in The Pallant, at a rent of £6 10s. 0d. (£6.50) per year. To ensure good attendance at drill, a payment of 6d. (2½p) was introduced in 1879 to each man who attended at least six drills a year. When a fire occurred at night, two 'call boys' were sent to rouse the firemen, but during the day a hooter was sounded to summon the men. They came from all directions; some would race to the fire station to prepare the red painted engine, while others commandeered horses from the Bear Inn or from the cab rank at the railway station. Often this meant



The former fire station on the corner of West Street and Park Road South, at this time used by hairdresser Jess Hunt.

that the two horses obtained did not match in size, inclination or pace, which made it difficult for the firemen to control them. On arrival at the fire a water supply was found and the men would pump the levers either side of the engine to get up the pressure for the hoses. This task was frequently carried out by the townsfolk, especially as local landlords kept the pumpers supplied with beer.

From about 1880 to 1888 the brigade was captained by John Arter who had been First Lieutenant under Captain Stallard. During the fire brigade annual dinner of 1882 it was reported that the brigade had been called to 11 fires since its formation and had been instrumental in saving a great deal of property. Their services had been greatly appreciated and this was shown by Mr Whillier, a tile and brick merchant of Rowlands Castle, who was so satisfied with their performance during a fire at his brickworks that he paid their expenses and donated £3 3s. 0d. (£3.15p) to their fund.

It was during this captaincy that problems arose between the brigade and the Local Board of Health. In 1882 the board built a flint-faced fire station in West Street for £100. The volunteer brigade felt the station was too far out of the town centre and were annoyed that they were not consulted as to its position. The board ordered them to put the engine into the new fire station but the brigade only housed the old engine there, as the new engine belonged to the brigade. The board threatened to take over the brigade so the volunteers agreed to move their new engine to the West Street premises. During the next few years the volunteers appear to have moved back to Mr Batchelor's store as the new fire station was converted into offices. It was later altered into a hairdressing shop owned by Jess Hunt and many will still remember the little shop.

On 2 March 1888 a fire broke out behind the Dolphin Hotel in West Street, and the fire engines were quickly brought to the scene. Unfortunately the hoses were so full of holes that more water came from the punctures than from the main nozzles. This event resulted in the taking over of the brigade by the Havant Local Board, and no longer relying on public subscription. The newly formed brigade appointed EJ Stent as Captain.

In June 1888 Sir Frederick Fitzwygram agreed to build a new engine house adjoining his stables at the end of Elm Lane and Park Road North. It was 25 feet (8m) by 16 feet (5m) and, to help save £16 a year, the firemen agreed to clean the engine themselves. New uniforms and helmets were bought and insurance premiums for the men paid. An honorary surgeon, Dr Norman, was appointed to the brigade and he instructed the men in ambulance duties. When a fire occurred

and the brigade attended, they were reimbursed by the insurance company. If the building was not insured the local board carried the expense.

Despite a better service, the local fire brigade faced several problems in tackling fires. In 1890 a fire began at Prospect Farm, but although it only took ten minutes to summon the men, it was 30 minutes before two horses could be obtained from the Bear Inn, at a cost of £2 15s. 0d. (£2.75) for use of horses and driver. Another problem was the size of the engine which enabled only a few firemen to be carried to the fire; others had to be conveyed in a hired brake. In 1892 a Merryweather 45 foot (14m) escape, costing £55, was bought by the Board of Health and the Board of Guardians. A year later the Havant Volunteer Fire Brigade won first prize in the St John's Ambulance Competition in Brighton.

The assistance of the Havant Fire Brigade was requested at a mill fire at Emsworth in August 1896, but the combined brigades could only prevent the fire from spreading to other buildings. The total damage was estimated at £5,000. On 28 July 1896 the engine was used to carry the coffin of Fireman Edward Till who had joined the service in 1889 and had died of cancer at the age of 44. The coffin was drawn through the town by two black horses, and many shops closed as a sign of respect. Mr Till's body was the first to be buried in the new extension of the cemetery in Eastern Road.



The funeral of Fireman Edward Till.

The next year Captain Stent tried to resign but was persuaded to continue when the board promised more support for the brigade. But discontent was caused by the news that their counterparts at Emsworth were to get a new steam powered, horse drawn Shand Mason fire engine, costing £435. Ironically it was not supplied until after one of the biggest fires in the area for years.



The Havant horse-drawn fire engine at the Stansted House fire, 1900.

In August 1900, during the last evening of the Goodwood Races, a man on horseback galloped into the town to raise the alarm. Stansted House was on fire. The firemen rushed to the scene to find the house well alight and all they could do was to keep the flames at bay while a hundred or more people fought to save the valuables. Unfortunately many priceless paintings and antique furniture were lost and the house was completely gutted. The final estimate of loss came to over £60,000. During the fire First Officer F Brazier was up a ladder about 20 feet (6m) above the ground, when a beam and part of a wall collapsed nearly crushing him. Another fireman, FC Stallard, also had a lucky escape when he became trapped in one of the rooms which had a patent locking catch, and he found he could not release it from inside. A colleague noticed he was missing and after tracking him down, released him by picking the lock with his penknife.

Havant Borough History Booklets



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Other firemen were struck by falling timbers but no-one was seriously injured. The fire continued to rage for two days until it burnt itself out.

Another destructive fire was to occur within three months to test the ability of the Havant Fire Brigade. It was in the afternoon of 23 November 1900 that the Limes, a house in Brockhampton Lane, was completely destroyed, the owner, Mr W Slade was out at the time and the house was empty. Smoke poured from the back of the house and was noticed by Mr Pullen, who informed Mr L Dedman of the adjoining farm. Forcing an entry, they searched the house in dense smoke and found the upper part well alight. Mr Dedman immediately saddled a horse and galloped into town to raise the alarm.

Captain Stent summoned the brigade and they were quickly on the scene. The main difficulty to overcome was the water supply, because the nearest hydrant was at the top of Brockhampton Lane and out of reach of the hoses. This problem was solved by turning on the hydrant and channelling the water into Brockhampton Stream, which then provided enough water for the engine to pump out from downstream. By now the fire had spread to engulf the whole building, and despite the valiant efforts of the fire brigade, the house was completely destroyed. However the brigade was successful in preventing the destruction of neighbouring buildings and hayricks by spraying them with water. After the fire the fire brigade was highly commended for their smart turnout and efficiency.

The next year Emsworth Brigade took delivery of their new engine which they christened with due ceremony, 'Edward VII' to commemorate the new King who, as Prince of Wales, had been a keen part time fireman and took a great interest in the work of the fire service. All that Havant could obtain over the next two years was 15 pairs of trousers at 11s. 6d. (57½p) each, and these were only supplied because the men said they would attend the Coronation Day Parade wearing kilts.

In 1903 Mr EJ Stent retired and Mr FL Stent took over for the next four years, during which time there were very few fires. Many of the firemen worked for Stent's Tannery and they were still called out by the use of a siren. Practises were held in recreation ground with timed trials, and the local children were often given a treat when they were bounced up in the air in the catching sheet. Competitions were held between different fire brigades, and Havant always did well in these. On one occasion, when the Gosport Brigade wanted to participate

in the National Fire Brigade Union Competition and found their engine was not up to standard, the Havant Brigade exchanged engines for the day.



Emsworth's fire engine being driven by Miss Isobel Silver whose father supplied the horses.

The smart uniforms and burnished brass helmets were a familiar sight in many local processions and training displays, and they played a great part in the life of the town. On 26 November 1909, the brigade staged a display which was watched with great interest by the public. The men were formed into two teams of six and they had to unlock the station, remove the engine, wheeled escape and hoses, and climb to the top of the council offices. Both teams did well with the fastest team completing the drill in 85 seconds. A social evening was held for the men at which a fountain pen was presented to Mr F Stallard for his work in arranging outings for the firemen. That year the men were taken to the Isle of Wight and given a tour of the island in a brake. Mr F Stallard was to represent the Havant Fire Brigade at the funeral of Edward VII in 1910, when representatives from each of the 150 brigades under the National Fire Brigade Union were sent to assist in crowd control. In 1911, during the George V coronation celebrations, the fire engine took part in the procession and was decorated with bunting and flowers.

During 1915 the brigade became concerned about the danger of fire at the Military Hospital, Langstone Towers, as there were fires and lamps burning day and night, and in the event of a fire it would take 30 minutes to pull the engine by hand to Langstone. As many of the local horses had been taken for service in France, the council decided to pay owners of vehicles a few shillings (pence) to transport firemen and hoses to any local fires. Later on, lorries were used as transport for firemen and equipment.

Havant Fire Brigade, 1926-1978

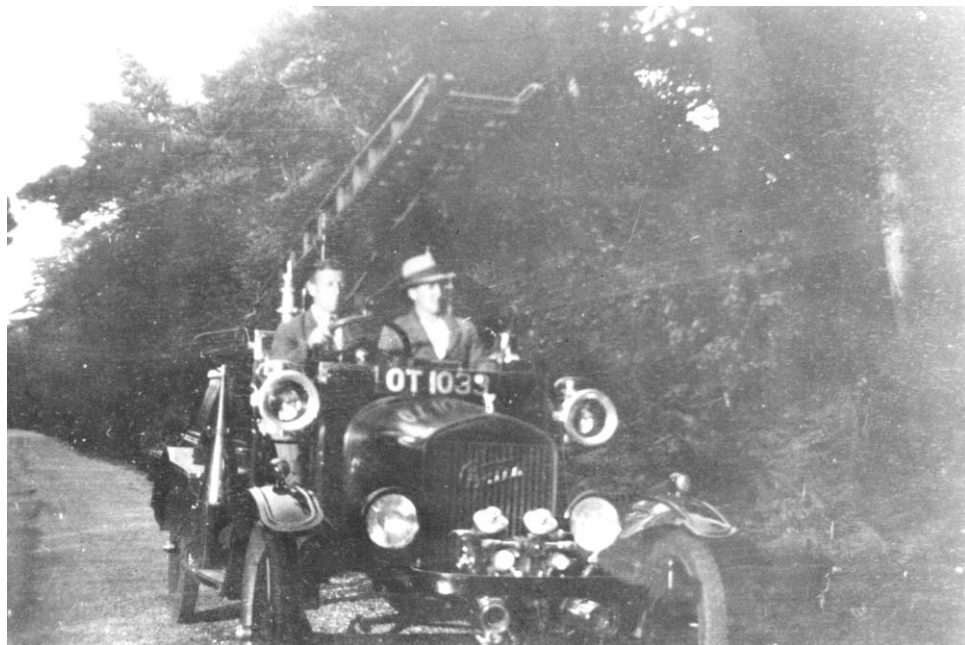
This article continues the history of the Havant Fire Brigade from 1788 to 1926 and begins with the introduction of the motor fire engine into the brigade. The following report is taken from the February 1926 issue of the *Fire* magazine:

Havant Firemen who have to sprint to Fires.

There seems little probability of Hastings being displaced from the position of having the worst equipped fire brigade in the country but Havant is running very close. If a private lorry is away on its rounds the Havant Firemen have to run to the Station, pick up the equipment and sprint to the outbreak. They are naturally exhausted when they reach the fire. It was also noted that a new engine would cost about £450 which would mean a 2d (1p) rate. Also that the manual engine they used was given to them over 50 years ago and most of the rest of the equipment was over 25 years old. Talking of the 12 men in the brigade who at that time between them had 200 years of service: It is these men who have to stand the criticism oft-times levelled at the town's system of fire-fighting and the Council's apathy which is far from being just reward for the loyal service of working men.

It was reports like this, and a growing feeling of insecurity, that finally forced the council to purchase a new motorised 25hp Ford Baico fire engine for £429 5s. (£429.25) from the Lennox Motor Company. It was not until 27 April 1926 that Havant's new motorised fire engine careered through the streets for the first time with its bell clanging. It must have been a proud sight as it drove round the streets of Havant, its brass gleaming and its engine pulsating beneath its bonnet. The Ford Baico was robust; the chassis had an almost legendary indestructibility and it was comparatively cheap with parts easily obtainable. It had an extending ladder and a front mounted pump which could deliver 200 gallons (900 litres) of

water a minute. So ended an era; the old manual, which had given many years of faithful service, was sent for auction and was bought for £5 by Alf Peters, a local coal merchant. .



The Ford Baico fire engine.

Chief Officer Fred Brazier and First Officer A Dockerill, both with 30-years-service, took charge of the new engine and over the next few years helped prevent and restrict local fires. One test of their efficiency in fighting fires came in 1929, when, early on the morning of 9 August, they were called to a fire at St Patrick's Convent on Hayling Island.

The whole of the east wing of the convent was destroyed by the fire, which originated in the work room and was believed to have been started by an iron. The Havant Brigade, with ten men under Captain Brazier, was on the scene in 20 minutes but by then the fire was a roaring furnace. The Portsmouth engine arrived soon after, under Superintendent CW Gould and five men, but there was little that they could do. As they checked the number of staff and children it was realised that Sister Celestine, the acting Reverend Mother, was missing. Her charred body was discovered near the door of the Mother Superior's room, and there was a quantity of money and valuables beside her. It was thought that she

had gone back into the building to see if it was clear of children, and to rescue some of the convent's valuables. Because of a poor water supply, the fire took ten hours to bring under control. The building, which was badly damaged, had been the residence of Mr G Sandeman (of the well-known port wine firm) when it was built in 1860. Later it became the Grand Hotel and then a school called Le Chateau Blanc until finally in 1927 it became a convent.

With the formation of the Havant and Waterlooville Urban District Council in 1932, one of the first things that was looked at was fire-fighting provision in the whole area. A report of the findings submitted on 19 July 1932 included the following two entries:

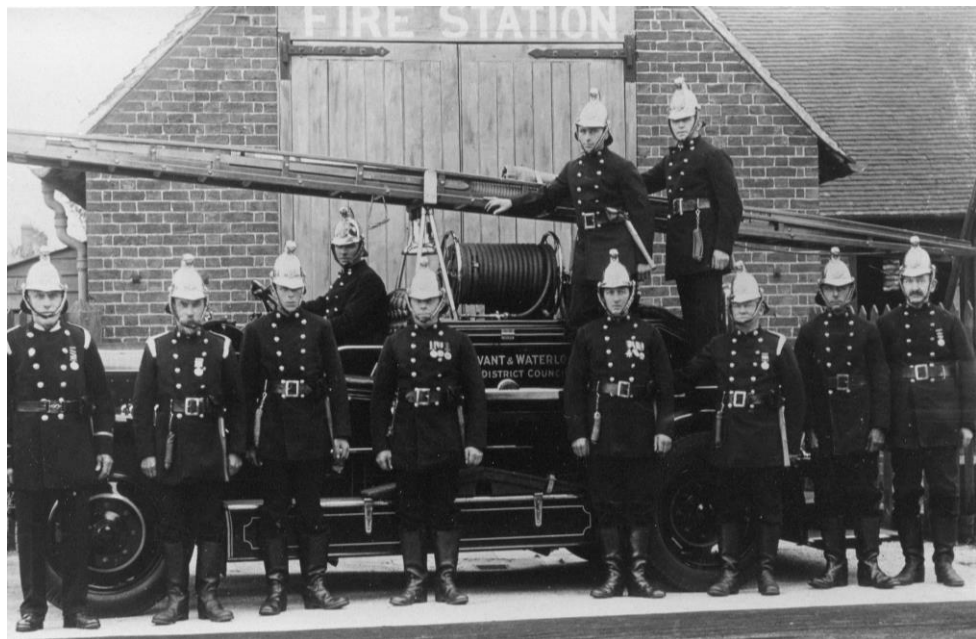
Fire Appliances

Havant Ward: 25hp Baico Fire Engine, that is a Ford chassis with a Dennis Pump and other appliances. An inventory has been supplied to the Engineer. Chief Officer – Mr F Brazier. Paid £5 per annum (paid annually). Ten firemen – 1s. (5p) per drill, which are fortnightly, paid quarterly.

Warblington Ward: Merryweather, 250 gallons per minute, 30–35hp, Hatfield Fire Engine complete with Telescola Extension Ladder to reach 35 feet (10.5m). Chief Officer – HW Griffin paid £10 per annum (paid monthly). Second Officer – 3s. 6d. (17½p). Engineer – 4s. (20p). Eleven firemen – paid 2s. 6d. (12½p) per drill held monthly. The amount is paid to the captain of the fire brigade at the end of every quarter.

After considering this report the council recommended that a new fire engine should be bought for Havant and the old one sent to Waterlooville where a newly formed brigade was to be established. The equipment at North Havant was to be handed over to Rowlands Castle Parish Council. The council members attended demonstrations of three new fire engines, a Dennis, a Morris and a Merryweather, at the Crescent, Hayling Island on 10 November 1932. It was decided to buy the Merryweather at a cost of £950 and transfer the Ford Baico to Waterlooville. A demonstration of the newly acquired fire engine which was 40hp and could deliver 275 gallons (1,250 litres) of water a minute was held in Bedhampton playing fields for the Havant people. In 1934 it was thought desirable that the retiring age of fireman should be 65, and as a result of this Chief Officer Fred Brazier announced his retirement. The council presented him with a £10 10s. (£10.50) honorarium for 43-years-service, also £29 from the Brazier Testimonial Fund. The new Chief Officer was Captain F Stallard, and,

with the retirement also of First Officer Dockerill, Mr H Richards was promoted to his post.



Havant firemen with their new Merryweather fire engine outside of the Park Road North Fire Station.

Most of the fires around this time were caused by sparks from road and rail steam engines setting the grass and bushes alight, car fires and chimney fires. The method of calling the men was the setting off of a maroon rocket, but in 1936 one exploded over the police court in West Street, damaging a ventilator, breaking glass and knocking a slate from the roof. An electric alarm was then fitted and three one minute bursts were used to call out the men. In 1936/37 the estimated expenditure for the Havant Fire Brigade was £105, compared with the Emsworth Brigade which was £70 plus an extra £86 16s 9d. (£86.84) to have its engine converted from solid tyres to pneumatic Chief Officer F Stallard resigned in April 1936 and was replaced by H Richards, and Mr Albert Till was made up to first officer.

By 1937 a new Merryweather Hatfield fire engine was delivered to Waterlooville and the old Ford Baico was sent to North Hayling fire station, sited

in the old waterworks shed. While in Havant the fire station was moved to the council depot on the west side of Park Road North.



When fireman Gordon Till got married his colleagues attended the church along with the fire engine.

As the possibility of war became closer, air raid precaution lectures were attended by fire brigade members, and in July 1938, the first two light Beresford trailer pumps were delivered for the newly formed Auxiliary Fire Service (AFS) under Mr L Paxton. Also during this year the Fire Brigade Act was passed which meant that adjoining areas should go to each other's assistance. The emergency fire brigade in 1939 employed nine full time men, three each at Havant, Waterlooville and Emsworth, and the Havant AFS Stations were situated at the fire station in the Park Road North, outbuildings at Warblington House, Pook Lane, which were rented at 5s. (25p) per week, and at the council depot in Bedhampton, which was by the Belmont roundabout.

The AFS was mobilised in September 1939 but it was not until a year later that evidence of enemy action appeared in the council minute of September 1940: *Havant Fire Engine, to Spitfire crashed at Thorney: four hours at fire*. In the Havant and Waterloo Urban District area there were now three full time stations, four AFS stations constantly manned and two action stations manned as required. They had three motor pumps, 24 trailer pumps and 12 other vehicles.

The 'other vehicles' were a variety of motors offered by the people for the war effort, including a Sunbeam open tourer which was used to pull a trailer pump.

The build-up of air raids towards the end of 1940 and the concentration on Portsmouth and Southampton, produced great pressure on the local fire brigade who assisted at fires at Fleet Air Arm, Bitterne, Pollock and Brown, Southampton and Edwin Jones, Southampton. One of the worst attacks came to Portsmouth on the 10 January 1941, when 300 raiders dropped high explosive bombs and some 25,000 incendiaries which started 2,314 fires, killed 171, injured 430 and left 3,000 homeless. Three fire engines and equipment were sent from Havant, Waterlooville and Emsworth to assist in extinguishing the conflagration. For two days relief crews were also sent to fight fires in the city. To fight the fire at the Co-op, the Havant Fire Brigade took the Merryweather and the Havant AFS used Mr Morgan Marshall's water-cress lorry to tow a Scammel trailer pump. For this often dangerous work the full time AFS members were paid a standard rate of pay of £3 10s. 0d. (£3.50) a week.

Portsmouth came under heavy attack once again in March 1941 and for two days the local firemen from Havant and district assisted in fighting fires at the Central Power Station. Locally, arrangements were made with the railway company that, in the event of the Langstone to Hayling Island road bridge being destroyed fire appliances would be conveyed by train.

By mid-1941 it was realised that a more organised fire fighting force was needed, which could be quickly controlled and diverted to places where it was required. In August the National Fire Service was formed and the county was divided into fire force areas, and the one covering this area was 'Fire Force 14' (Portsmouth area), commanded by Superintendent AE Johnson MBE, The Havant Area (Division 'A') was run by Column Officer Fountain and Havant became a sub-division station. Most local records ceased after the NFS was formed and very few details of fires were recorded. Gosslyn House, West Street was taken over by the NFS in 1942 and later their equipment was transferred here. The building became the main fire station until 1955 and has since been demolished. In 1942 we must note the passing of the first motor fire engine, the Ford Baico, which was sold for £2 to Stoke Farm. It was used for spare parts and finally buried for good on a rubbish dump. Mr H Richards resigned in March 1942 after 34 years with the Havant Fire Brigade and his place as chief officer was taken by Mr F Gillard and became known as company officer.



Members of the Auxiliary Fire Service proudly display one of their light Beresford trailer pumps outside of the Park Road North fire station.

The NFS took over the old parchment works in Homewell in 1943 but had to use the public toilets nearby to save having to build their own. For this privilege the NFS were charged £8 a year!

Just before D-Day local fire stations were reinforced and Havant's man-power was increased to between 40 and 50 men, plus all the extra equipment to fight the anticipated enemy raids. Havant did not suffer badly during the war although several landmines were dropped in the area, particularly on Hayling Island, and many incendiary bombs were dealt with.

Two years after the war the NFS was disbanded and the brigades were handed over to the counties. The NFS asked Havant Council for permission to get rid of the original Merryweathers from Havant and Waterlooville, but handed back the Dennis pump escape, the Austin towing vehicle with a Dennis pump and the Dodge water carrier.

It was realised that a new fire station was needed, but it was not until 1955 that it was built. Opened in August, the outstanding feature was the 60 foot (18m) escape drill tower, which together with the station cost £12,000 and was built in Park Way. The staff now consisted of one full time man and 20 part-timers, with a new Bedford pump escape and an Austin towing vehicle. Three years later a Bedford water tender and a Landrover were added.

In 1961 Stent's glovemaking factory finally closed which resulted in the decrease of volunteer firemen. The Stent family had been involved in the running of the early volunteer brigade since 1888, and had encouraged their employees to serve with the Havant brigade. It now became necessary for Havant to become a daylight-manned-station with nine full-time and 14 part-time firemen.

Station Officer L Holtham was appointed the full-time officer and then Station Officer M Buick until 1965 when the part-time Station Officer Gillard also left. Station Officer Lambourne was in charge from 1965 to 1970.

In the early 1970s the Bedford fire engines were replaced by two Dennis Jaguar (Water Tender) fire engines, and in 1974 a new Landrover was added. From 1970 to 1972 the Station Officer was Paul Wiseman.

The Havant Fire Brigade continued its fine record of fire fighting in the area, including large fires at John Palmer's Brush Factory, Landport, the Metal Box Company and the spectacular blaze which almost destroyed the South Parade Pier. Another incident entailed putting to sea to assist in the tanker fire on board the *Pacific Glory* in October 1970. In 1978 two appliances from Havant assisted in fighting the £2m fire at Woolworths in Bognor Regis.

From 1972 the Havant fire station was run by Station Officer Alan Wright who carried on the fire-fighting and fire prevention service first started in Havant some 200 years ago.

The Havant Bonfire Boys The Background, 1850-1878

By the early Victorian period it seemed that Guy Fawkes Night celebrations throughout the country were all but moribund. In the few places where they were observed at all they had usually degenerated into little more than a pretext for one or two high-spirited adolescents to let off fireworks in the street. Any kind of popular – let alone organised – commemoration was rare indeed.

But all this changed dramatically in 1850 when Pope Pius IX decided to sanction the re-introduction into England of a Roman Catholic hierarchy.

With the Jacobite scares of the 18th century an increasingly distant memory and the Catholic Emancipation Act removing virtually all discrimination against Catholics in 1829, it might have been assumed that the old sectarian fears of Popery had been banished from the popular consciousness. But the extreme reaction to the creation of the first Roman Catholic bishop in this country since the Reformation suggests otherwise. The Bull proclaiming Pius's decision had been issued in September, but news of it only reached England in mid-October, just in time for it to achieve maximum impact on Guy Fawkes Night, and consequently the celebrations that year were unlike anything seen for a very long time.

Local press reports clearly reflect this. Here, for example, is the *Portsmouth Times and Naval Gazette* on the 1850 celebrations at Cowes:

For years Guy Fawkes has been a stranger to our streets and bonfires have been prohibited here. But the impudence of the Pope's Bull has brought them both to light again. There was a huge bonfire and the effigy of a cardinal was burnt. The surrounding country seemed to be in a blaze. No less than thirteen fires could be seen on the opposite coast of Hampshire and there was not a hamlet on the Island without one.

At Fareham, according to the *Hampshire Telegraph*:

The church bells were rung, a sermon was preached on the errors Catholicism. And: In the evening, by means of a general subscription, fireworks were

exhibited throughout the town. A bonfire was also lit and an effigy burnt. At Titchfield there was a bonfire, fireworks and a parade with banners, for example 'No Popery' and 'England Expects Every Man To Do His Duty'.

Whilst at Gosport, according to the *Portsmouth Times and Naval Gazette*:

The 5th November celebrations passed off with more demonstrations of popular feeling than there has been for several years. A large bonfire was made near St Matthew's Chapel and one near Alverstoke. And the quantity of fireworks set off of all descriptions was immense.

1850 may have been exceptional, but it did mark the beginning of a resurgence in popular enthusiasm for Guy Fawkes celebrations. This was, however, increasingly at odds with the official attitude towards them, which was becoming ever more disapproving. In 1859 for example, the compulsory commemoration of the failure of the gunpowder plot in all churches – in force for 253 years – was abolished, thus marking the end of all state involvement in the celebrations. There also seems to have been a concerted effort made by the police and local magistrates in the 1850s and 1860s to suppress large-scale semi-organised celebrations. This could sometimes lead to trouble. For example, in Guildford there were near riots in 1851, 1854 and 1863,¹ whilst at Cowes we have a good local example of just how determined the authorities could be to suppress what seems – in this case at least – to have been nothing particularly serious. This is how the *Hampshire Telegraph* reported it:

Until within the last three or four years, the celebration of 5th November has been duly observed by our idlers, but with a degree of order that did them credit. Lately, however, a change for the worse has taken place and the streets have been filled with a concourse of disorderly men and boys. On one or two occasions the police have tried to suppress this nuisance, but in vain, for what could a score of policemen do when opposed by hundreds of ne'er do wells?

The newspaper then alleged that there had been a plot to attack the property of people who had complained about the conduct of the revellers, and that, in consequence, the police presence had been strengthened by the recruitment of 'specials'. Troops had even been put on stand-by in case things got seriously out of hand. But:

Happily the mob, cowed by these preparations made to curb any outbreaks, refrained from doing anything unlawful, and we hope for the credit of the town to have seen the last of these processions, which can do no good.

Judging from press reports, the places where 5 November was celebrated with greatest enthusiasm locally in the 1850s and early 1860s were Bishops Waltham, Titchfield, Fareham and – at least for a time – Gosport.

Gosport is an interesting example of how the celebrations could acquire extra layers of meaning, because for a few years from 1855 (uniquely, it seems) Gosport commemorated 5 November not only as the date that the Gunpowder Plot was foiled, but also when, in 1854, the Russians were defeated at the battle of Inkerman. Incidentally, they also made much here in 1858 of the 300th anniversary of the accession of Elizabeth, though that was actually on 13 November. However, the *Hampshire Telegraph* reported that the 1858 celebrations had been marred by the letting off of fireworks in the street, leading to fears that if this was repeated it could lead to future celebrations being cancelled. Whether or not such a ban was in force in the following year is uncertain – though the absence of any press coverage suggests that it was – but in 1860 the *Hampshire Telegraph* could record that:

The 5th November passed over this year with more than ordinary quietness. In the evening a group of five grotesquely attired persons paraded the streets [but] the demonstration, however, was miserably stupid.

And that seems to have been the end of Gosport's 5 November celebrations.

There are no press reports relating to Havant prior to 1864, but that does not mean, of course, that Guy Fawkes Night went unobserved here. Indeed, judging by the magnitude of the events of that year it is more than likely that some form of revelry had regularly been taking place. This suspicion is confirmed by the fact that we know about the 1864 celebrations not from any reports of the time, but from the prosecutions that resulted from them at Fareham Petty Sessions about a month later, proceedings which the *Hampshire Telegraph* described as 'somewhat novel' and which they covered in considerable detail. Part of the novelty probably lay in the fact that eight of the thirteen accused were being prosecuted under the recently passed Gunpowder Act which introduced new penalties for firework misuse, but it must have been mainly because they were all youths from eminently respectable local families. They included Needham Longcroft, son of the solicitor (and a lord of the manor) CJ Longcroft; Anthony

Lewis, son of the surveyor and auctioneer Charles Lewis; Richard Stedman, son of the surgeon William Stedman; and Alfred Stent, a junior member of the prominent parchment-making family. They all pleaded 'not guilty' and were represented in court by Mr Field of Gosport. The other five accused, who were described as either 'labourers' or 'navvies' had no legal representation and were charged with rolling lighted tar barrels around the streets.

From the report of the trials we can form a pretty clear picture of the night's events. In the evening a crowd of some 300 to 400 people gathered in the town centre and at about 9pm set off on a torch-lit procession down West Street almost as far as Bedhampton, returning about an hour later. In the meantime a bonfire was lit in the middle of East Street, piles of straw were set ablaze elsewhere and tar barrels were lit and rolled about, causing damage to at least one doorway. Many of the revellers – including Longcroft, Lewis and their friends – were in fancy dress or had disguised themselves with blackened faces or false whiskers. Despite the best efforts of Mr Field every single defendant was found guilty. The eight accused of throwing fireworks were each fined 5s. (25p) with 7s. 6d. (37½p) costs, whilst the tar barrel rollers were each fined 10s. (50p) (or, in one instance, £1 with 4s. 6d. (22½p) costs).

Were the events of 1864 significantly worse than what had gone on before, or were the authorities simply taking a firmer stand than usual in an effort to suppress a customary demonstration? If the latter, they were scarcely successful, for trouble flared again in 1865, albeit on a smaller scale. This time, a crowd of about 100 gathered during the course of the evening and, having commenced by giving 'three groans' for the police, marched up and down West Street and North Street from about 9pm until 10.30pm. An effigy was also burnt (which the police put out) and a bonfire lit in West Street.

In all, eight people were charged with offences although only five were convicted. Thomas Voke was fined 5s. (25p), with costs, for throwing squibs in North Street and George Taylor was fined £1 with costs, for lighting the West Street bonfire. But the really serious punishments were reserved for those who, according to the police, had been the ringleaders conducting the mob. They were none other than Needham Longcroft, Anthony Lewis and Richard Stedman. If the magistrates – on their own admission – had been lenient with the young men for their first offences the year before, they were in no mood to be lenient now. Each was fined no less than £5 with 7s. 6d. (37½p) costs.

This firm action had the desired effect, for we have no reports of any trouble for the next three years. Indeed, in November 1867 the *Portsmouth Times and Naval Gazette* commented on how quiet Havant was. But in 1869 there were more disturbances. A crowd of about 200 gathered in the town centre, a bonfire was lit in West Street and fireworks and fireballs (balls of coal dust and clay used to kindle fires) were thrown. Three people subsequently appeared in court: Henry Pratt, 'a lad', for lighting the bonfire; Charles Stallard, 15-years-old, for throwing fireworks; and James Johnson, an apprentice coachbuilder, for throwing a fireball. Stallard was fined £1, with failure to pay resulting in 14 days imprisonment with hard labour, whilst Pratt and Johnson were each fined £2 with failure to pay resulting in one month's imprisonment with hard labour.

Again, a firm stand proved successful. True, the following year Charles Stallard made his second court appearance and was fined 12s. 6d. (62½p) for rolling a lighted tar barrel 'along the turnpike road', but this seems to have been an isolated incident which actually took place on the evening of 4 November.

In 1871, however, there was more trouble, resulting in seven Havant youths appearing in court. Six were charged with throwing fireworks and the other with lighting a bonfire in North Street. All had no previous convictions for Guy Fawkes Night offences. The chairman of the Fareham magistrates declared that: *The setting off of fireworks had been a nuisance for many years and he was determined to put a stop to it.* Consequently he handed out fines of between £1 and £1 10s. (£1.50p with seven days to pay and seven days imprisonment with hard labour for default. Once again, this seems to have had the desired effect, for in 1872 there were no reported incidents and 1873 was also quiet, save for the fact that on the night of 5 November, according to the *Hampshire Telegraph*: *A number of fires, which are supposed to have been the work of incendiaries, took place in the neighbourhood and caused much alarm.* A shed belonging to Henry Snook at Belmont Castle in Bedhampton was destroyed; another shed near Havant railway station was badly damaged; and two hayricks were also set ablaze. Was the date a mere coincidence or was something more sinister afoot?

In 1874 there were two more prosecutions for letting off fireworks for which fines of 10s. (50p) were imposed and in 1875 no fewer than seven people were charged, though all for minor offences for which fines of 1s. 6d. (7½p) were deemed sufficient.

This seems to have been the last of the trouble that Havant saw on Guy Fawkes Night, for both 1876 and 1877 passed off peacefully.

Bonfire Boys, 1878-1885

This suppression was to lead to two developments. On the one hand, almost universally, Guy Fawkes Night became an increasingly domestic affair celebrated by individual families in their own back gardens. On the other hand, in a very few places, it developed into a grand – but safe and respectable – public event organised by local bonfire societies or bonfire boys.

The pioneer in this respect was the most famous place in the country for 5 November celebrations – Lewes. The earliest bonfire societies here – those of Town and Cliffe – were founded in 1853 after years of mayhem during which local magistrates had struggled in vain to suppress the celebrations altogether. These societies established a form of ceremony which would be imitated elsewhere, including Havant, i.e. a torchlight parade through the streets with a band, banners and people in fancy dress, terminating at a big open space where a bonfire would be lit, effigies burned and a firework display mounted, all under the control of local middle-aged, middle-class professionals and trades people.

Unfortunately we do not know exactly who the original Havant Bonfire Boys of 1878 were, although they must surely have been, by and large, the same people who we know organised the 1880 celebrations. They included Henry Green, a solicitor; Thorburn and Albert Stallard, parchment makers and fellmongers; John Arter, ironmonger and whitesmith; and Charles Browne, Inland Revenue officer. These then were eminently respectable citizens, but it is revealing that in their inaugural year their application to the local magistrates for permission to organise a parade around the town was refused. Perhaps memories of the 1860s remained strong, and they had to make do simply with assembling in the Fair Field to light a bonfire, burn effigies and let off a few fireworks. These celebrations were so low key that they did not even rate a mention in the local press, and we know about them only from a speech given at the Bonfire Boys' Dinner of 1882 by Green, who recalled that a mere £2 had been raised to buy fireworks, but that even this modest display had scarcely commenced when a spark accidentally fell into the remainder of the stock setting them all off at once, and that finished the night's work.

Things went rather better in 1879 when a parade through the streets was permitted. £14 was raised to buy fireworks and the local press – the *Hampshire Telegraph* at any rate – gave the event a brief but complimentary write-up, commenting that the firework display was *excellent* and that despite a crowd of some 2,000 gathering in the Fair Field *the proceedings were very orderly*. This

modest success must have emboldened the bonfire boys because the next year their celebrations were of an altogether greater magnitude, with no less than £50 spent on the festivities. The reporter from the *Hampshire Telegraph* was duly impressed:

In its brightest days the 5th November could hardly have been more enthusiastically celebrated than it was...at Havant. In most parts of the kingdom, and especially in the large towns, the custom has for years been gradually dying out, but in quiet decorous, easy-going Havant 'Guy Fawkes Day' is becoming more and more regarded as an occasion worthy of being marked in the most orthodox of fashions.

Events began at 6.30pm outside the town hall in East Street with a parade that marched around the town and ended up at the Fair Field. This parade is described in some detail. First of all came what are referred to as *pioneers* dressed in *fantastic garb* carrying torches and coloured flares. Next came a *commander-in-chief* in *showy uniform* mounted upon what is somewhat euphemistically described as *as warlike a steed as could reasonably be expected*. He was followed by his *Lieutenant* and a banner bearing the legend 'Prosperity To The Bonfire Boys'. There was then: *a brass band grotesquely dressed, men in armour, a bishop, mace-bearers, and the effigies to be burned*. Finally there were the bonfire boys themselves in what was described as *full regalia*. Once they had reached the Fair Field the effigies were burned on a 30 foot (9 metre) high bonfire, and there was a firework display – courtesy of Messrs Brock and Co. – after which there was another parade around the town and the letting off of 50 rockets. It was estimated that 2,000 to 3,000 people watched the evening's entertainment.

An innovation of 1880 was the holding of a Bonfire Boys' Dinner to which, on 23 November at the Bear Hotel, some thirty guests were invited.

In 1881 the celebrations were at least as grand and the *Hampshire Telegraph* reporter's prose tried to match it:

On Monday, when the shades of night had fallen, the pleasant little town of Havant was in a state of agreeable excitement. All the inhabitants from babes in arms to the village patriarchs were in the streets, which were alive with train loads of sightseers from Portsmouth and the adjacent towns. The celebrations being of a magnificence that has not been paralleled [with] a daring if not reckless disregard for expense.

Indeed, £66 had been raised, £48 going on the fireworks alone.

On this occasion the parade began not outside the town hall, but outside the Bear Hotel, and again we have a detailed description. It comprised:

The Bonfire Boys' Sergeant bearing the Crest of the Society
Beefeaters with torches and coloured flares
A banner 'Unity is Strength'
Harlequins and clowns
Bonfire Boys Brass Band
Knights in Armour on horseback
Pirates
The effigies to be burned
Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday
A banner 'Welcome Peace and Plenty'
'Bushrangers'
Dick Turpin and Black Bess (his horse)
A banner 'Success to the Bonfire Boys'
'Indians'
Borough of Portsmouth Coat of Arms
Members of an organisation called the Southsea Walrus Hunt
Remainder of Bonfire Boys' members and subscribers 'in full
costume'

The parade then proceeded to the Fair Field where a gibbet was constructed on top of the bonfire, the effigies hung from it and a policeman, Mr Charles Browne, recited their 'offences'. The bonfire was then lit and the fireworks let off; an impressive display that included some 200 rockets, the effect of which must, however, have been somewhat spoiled by a thick fog.

The 1882 celebrations were even more lavish, though they had to be held over to Monday the 6th, Sunday being deemed inappropriate. They took place, unfortunately, in what the *Hampshire Telegraph* described as: *The most wretched meteorological conditions it would be possible to conceive*, yet despite the cold and the rain the crowds turned out in even greater numbers than before, with special trains laid on from Chichester and Portsmouth.

Again, the parade began at the Bear Hotel and proceeded along East Street and North Street and then down West Street as far as the Black Dog public house, then back up North Street to the Fair Field. (For some reason the parades appear

never to have gone down South Street). Once at the Fair Field the bonfire was lit, the effigies burned and the fireworks let off, with, as an added attraction, a very ambitious and elaborate re-enactment of the British Navy's bombardment of Alexandria which had taken place three months previously. However, this patriotic display was not a success, for the continual rain had made the gunpowder damp and it had to be abandoned. It was re-staged the following evening, but, inevitably, the crowd that turned out to witness it was much smaller. In fact, the extravaganza resulted in a shortfall of funds, with £72 having been spent but only £67 raised.

Another innovation of the 1882 festivities was the reciting of a poem at the Fair Field just before the lighting of the bonfire. The oration was performed by Thorburn Stallard, the bonfire boys' honorary secretary, who, for no particular reason, was dressed as a Mexican. He began by making a few general remarks about the 5 November celebrations before turning to the big news event of the time – the war in Egypt, to which the bombardment of Alexandria had been the prelude. The war had, just a few weeks previously, concluded with a swift British victory over the forces of Arabi Pasha, and indeed it was Arabi Pasha and his ally, the Turkish Sultan, who were shortly to be burned in effigy. As Stallard put it, they intended:

*To burn the traitor, Arabi by name,
And also one who knew his little game,
Whose antecedent character is murky,
Of course I mean the Potentate of Turkey.*

He then moved on to more parochial affairs such as a dispute between the Local Board of Health and the fire brigade, and the appointment of a new nuisances inspector.

*Coming to Havant, I find that all is quiet,
Excepting that we nearly had a riot
Between the Local Board and Fire Brigade,
In which the Local Board at last were made
To rub names off a house, which I've heard said
A certain Batchelor once called a shed.
They also have appointed an Inspector,
To be of all foul smells a good detector,
We hope that by the streets it will be seen*

*There's truth in the old words 'New brooms sweep clean'.
But if the Local Board don't make him do it,
I only say that they'll be sure to rue it.*

The 1883 celebrations were probably the grandest of all and they were certainly the most expensive, with £73 being spent on them. They were, however, again blighted by the weather which was, according to the *Hampshire Telegraph*:

A chill November night that sent its cold rain and mist penetrating to ones very marrow: wild and murky overhead, cold and soggy underfoot.

Despite this, the crowds were huge (the *Portsmouth News* estimated 10,000) and the parade was, declared the *Hampshire Telegraph*: *Positively more gorgeous than it has been for some time past.*

The 1883 parade began in North Street and included:

Robin Hood (Thorburn Stallard) and his merry men; Bluebeard (C Furnice) and his wives; Mephistopheles (Anthony Lewis); [who, it will be recalled, had been prosecuted for his part in the revelries of 1864 and 1865] a buccaneer king (John Arter); and the ghastly and recently captured ghost of Knox Road' (A Winter).

This is curious as Knox Road, close to the boundary between Havant and Bedhampton, was a recent development and none of the houses there could have been more than seven or eight-years-old. Then followed:

Clowns, heathen Chinese, Ethiopians, and finally: A mob of brats, cats, rats, acrobats, aristocrats, plutocrats, democrats and red republicans.

Not only was the parade bigger than ever before, but it also took a more extensive route, journeying as far east as Denvilles and as far west as the Prince of Wales in West Street before its usual termination in the Fair Field. Here, once again, Thorburn Stallard delivered his poem.

The dominant theme this year was Ireland and all three of the effigies to be burned were Fenian conspirators: two involved in the infamous Phoenix Park murders of the year before and the other a 'dynamiter' (Dr Gallagher) who had recently been sentenced to life imprisonment. The firework display that followed must have been quite a sight, including, as it did, shooting stars, salvoes of shells, jewel-headed cobras, aerial banquets, showers of ferns and – surely the *pièce de*

résistance – a 700 square foot (65 square metres) representation of the Niagara Falls. Afterwards there seems to have been a considerable crush at the railway station as people struggled to pile onto the trains, although there are no reports of injuries.

1884 followed much the same pattern as previous years, including, it must be said, misfortune with the weather. Just before the commencement of the firework display it rained so hard that people were forced to run for cover. There was also a feeling that for the first time there was a scaling-down of the event as only £56 10s. (£56.50) was raised. The *Hampshire Telegraph* certainly considered the firework display to be less impressive than it had been, and the *Portsmouth Times and Naval Gazette* whilst proclaiming the occasion an *undoubted success* did nevertheless feel that: *The procession might not compare so favourably with that of previous years*. It seems, however, to have been a colourful and diverse spectacle which included:

Charles I and his court, a Mexican bullfighter, Herne the hunter, a pirate king, and an assortment of maskers, millers, mummers, mummies, monkeys, marines, mormons, missionaries, mermaids, mongolians, moravians, maniacs, mongeese and myriad millions.

The crowds too were as huge as ever, arriving by special trains, brakes and buses from as far afield as Portsmouth, Chichester and Petersfield. 4,000 alone were reckoned to have travelled in by train, and, according to the *Hampshire Post*, about 2,000 more were unable to purchase tickets. In fact, the numbers were so great that they actually hampered the parade's progress.

The 1885 celebrations differed significantly from those of the previous few years only in the fact that they were held in fine, dry, weather and surely no one amongst the thousands who left the Fair Field that evening could have guessed that the Havant bonfire boys and their spectacular extravaganzas were at an end, but that was indeed the case. Significantly, no Bonfire Boys' Dinner was held that year, and the following October there was a brief announcement in the *Portsmouth News* that there would be no celebrations in 1886 owing to a *deficiency of funds*. As far as one can tell, no subsequent effort was made ever to revive the bonfire boys or any other Guy Fawkes Night celebrations in Havant.

How could such a popular and by now traditional event, organised by some of the pillars of the local community, vanish so quickly and completely? If the bonfire boys had folded after their ignominious first year in 1878, or even after

the over-ambitious plans and dreadful weather of 1882, it would not have been a complete surprise, but by 1885 their permanence looked assured.

There is no obvious answer, but it is worth remembering that there had always been dissenting voices that had questioned the celebration of Guy Fawkes Night in such an extravagant manner. The cost certainly distressed some people, such as the anonymous correspondent to the *Hampshire Telegraph* in 1882 – he merely signed himself *A Protestant* – who wondered: *Whether the money squandered on fireworks might not be better spent on soup kitchens and other charitable measures for the poor.* Others simply thought the celebrations *ridiculous*; in 1879 for instance the *Portsmouth News* used its 5 November editorial column to proclaim, a trifle optimistically, that:

The absurd custom of parading the streets with ridiculous effigies seems at last to have been all but done away with, and we hope that within a few years the beneficial effects of an enlightened education will entirely eradicate the proceedings.'

Two years later the newspaper renewed the attack, declaring that:

On the whole a more senseless celebration could scarcely be conceived, and the sooner it sinks into oblivion the better it will be for this enlightened age.

But there was another concern, rarely articulated but often implied, that, for all its light-hearted pageantry and spectacle, there lurked beneath the surface of the bonfire boys' celebrations a divisive sectarianism and political bias. This was certainly a notion that the bonfire boys and their supporters were keen to dispel – perhaps a little too often and a little too insistently, as though it touched upon a raw nerve. For instance, in his annual speeches at the Bonfire Boys' Dinner, their president, Henry Green, constantly stressed their impartiality. In 1881 he attributed the success of the celebrations to the fact that: *They had abstained from all party affairs whether in politics or religion*, whilst in 1882 he assured his audience that: *They were not a political or fanatic society but merely wanted to provide innocent pleasure or amusement.*

Everyone, therefore, must have been disturbed by events at Worthing in 1883 where the local Bonfire Club (formed in 1880) suddenly transformed itself into the Worthing Excelsior Skeleton Army, a mob whose sole aim was to drive from the town, by force if necessary, a recently established branch of the Salvation Army.

There is no suggestion that anything like that happened in Havant, but the charge of political bias is not one from which the bonfire boys can be wholly absolved, especially when one looks at their choice of effigies to be burned. Effigy burning had never been part of the earliest 5 November celebrations and was rare before 1670. Even after this date the figures to be burned were usually drawn from a limited cast of stock characters comprising Guy Fawkes himself, the Pope and the Devil. Only in the 19th century did it become the custom to select contemporary hate-figures – local, national or foreign – who had nothing whatsoever to do with the gunpowder plot.

There is only one example of a purely local figure being selected by the Havant bonfire boys for such drastic treatment. In May 1881, John Tremelling, an employee of the Havant branch of the Capital and Counties Bank, absconded with the several hundred pounds he had embezzled by systematically falsifying customers' accounts. Consequently his effigy was consigned to the flames that year. But usually national, and particularly imperial affairs dominated the celebrations. We have already seen that the Egyptian War in 1882 and Fenian terrorism in 1883 determined the effigies chosen in those years, whilst in 1884 it was the Sudan on everyone's mind. General Gordon had been besieged in Khartoum since July (and would eventually be killed when the city fell the following January) so it was the two leaders of the Sudanese revolt, the Mahdi and Osman Dinga who were burned. But when there was no great Imperial crisis or adventure to preoccupy them, the bonfire boys' choice of victim is often revealing. On no less than three occasions, in 1879, 1880 and 1885, Charles Stuart Parnell, the parliamentary leader of the Irish Home Rule movement, was consigned to the flames, as well as his colleague Joseph Biggar in 1880. Whilst in 1881, together with Tremelling, Charles Guiteau, the assassinator in July of United States president Garfield; another Fenian terrorist O'Donovan Rossa; and the unlikely Mrs Annie Besant were chosen.

Why Annie Besant? True she had already gained some notoriety for her atheist views and advocacy of birth control and had come to prominence once more in 1881 through her championing of the atheist MP Charles Bradlaugh who was in the middle of a long battle to be allowed to affirm, rather than swear on the Bible, when taking his seat in the House of Commons. But did that really warrant her being lumped together with a fraudster, an assassin and a terrorist? It may have been thought that she had some local connection since she was the wife (though long-estranged) of the Reverend Frank Besant, brother of the well-

known Portsmouth-born writer, Walter. However, that seems a tenuous link and Henry Green threw little light on the matter in his speech at the Bonfire Boys' Dinner that year. He was adamant that: *The only persons whose effigies had been burnt were those who by general consent deserved to be held up to public execration*, greeted with cries of *Hear, hear*. But with regard to Annie Besant herself he merely remarked, rather coyly, that: *They might have been a little discourteous to the fair sex, having burned a lady*. This was greeted with laughter.

So the bonfire boys were impartial only up to a point. Irish Home Rulers and atheists were clearly beyond the pale. The claim Green had made earlier in his speech about maintaining neutrality in all political and religious matters was simply untrue.

None of this explains why the bonfire boys folded, but it may help to explain why they did not re-form after what was probably no more than a temporary financial crisis in 1886 – they had nearly suffered one in 1884. Perhaps they had become a little too controversial and possibly appeared somewhat old-fashioned, even vulgar, for an increasingly sophisticated urban community.

Bonfire celebrations tended to flourish best in small market towns, for example Titchfield, whose bonfire boys were formed about 1884 and have been in existence ever since, and whilst Havant could just about be so-described in the 1870s, this was barely the case by the late 1880s, by which time many new 'villa' residences had been built and the limits of the town had expanded. Indeed, this expansion would devour the Fair Field in 1887.

It may be significant that the event that superseded the bonfire boys' celebrations in Havant's social calendar was that epitome of genteel respectability – the Chrysanthemum Show. The first had been held in the town hall by the newly formed Havant Chrysanthemum Society on 7 November 1884 and was such a success that it became an annual event around that date thereafter.

This was the future – the Havant bonfire boys had had a glittering and spectacular existence, but in the end they were just like one of their own fireworks. Their splendour was purely ephemeral and once it had burnt itself out it could never be revived.

Appendix

John Pile

In the Saturday 25 June 1814 issue of his *Weekly Political Register* William Cobbett wrote:

Why is salt 20s (£1) a bushel, instead of 2s. 6d. (12½p) Because the maker of the salt has to pay 17s. 6d. (87½p) in tax, and in the expences appertaining to the tax. And do the people of Havant, who hanged and burnt Mr. Huskisson in effigy, suppose, that the grower of corn is not to be paid back the amount of his taxes as well as the maker of salt? The people of Havant (for this disgraceful act should be made known) formed a procession, having their victim seated upon an ass, followed by a chaise drawn by men. After parading about for some time, they arrived at a lamp-post, near the church, on which, after suitable admonitions, and exhortations as to the necessity of speedy repentance, the finisher of their law hanged him, while others were employed in making a fire, under the gallows, to consume the suspended body. The execution being accomplished, the mortal remains, viz. the ashes of the offender, were collected, placed in the chaise in a suitable receptacle, and carried away for interment, to the slow and discordant sound of broken bells and other instruments of hideous noise. Now, all Mr. Huskisson's crime was, telling the people very sensibly and very honestly, that, with our present taxes, they could not, upon an average of years, reasonably expect to eat their bread at less than double the price at which they ate it before the year 1792. He said further, that we could not expect to see the taxes diminished; and the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer has already confirmed his opinion: And yet the people of Havant have never, that I have heard of, petitioned against any tax; never against any expense; never against war with the Republicans of France, or with the Americans; never against any subsidy, grant, place, pension, barrack, or depot; never against any measure by which the public money was expended, and the taxes augmented, and the currency depreciated. What right have they, therefore, to complain of the high price of bread, in which price are included a large part of the taxes, necessary to meet the expenditure, of which expenditure they have never complained? They act as foolishly, or rather, unjustly, as a man, who, after having ordered an expensive entertainment, should hang and burn the landlord in effigy for bringing in his bill.

The circumstances surrounding this event were various and complex. Napoleon's defeat on the field of Waterloo was one year in the future, but England's politicians, landlords and tenant farmers were already contemplating the economically depressing effect that the end of the war would have on English farming. The steady increase in the population of the British Isles was reflected in the census figures for Havant: 1,670 in 1801 and 1,824 in 1811. Havant's poor rate in 1800 raised £996, and by 1813 this had increased to £1,525, reflecting the increase in the number of its recipients than in any improvement in their treatment. The average cost, in London, of 4lb (1.8kg) of bread, had remained remarkably steady at about 8d. (3p) throughout the final decade of the 18th century, but during the ten years ending in 1814 it had risen to 13d. (5p). Agricultural wages had risen rapidly throughout the last decade of the 18th century resulting in a real improvement in living standards, but by 1812 wages had reached a peak and were beginning to fall. Agricultural improvements such as the enclosure of the common arable fields, common wastes, and forests; the use of labour-saving farm machinery; and improved cropping rotations benefited the landlords and their tenants, but often left the agricultural labourer worse off. The enclosure of the Forest of Bere (4,137 acres, 1,674 hectares) under Act of Parliament of 1810 and completed in 1814, affected all manorial tenants in Havant with rights of common in the forest, and, although not in Havant parish, the simultaneous enclosure of Emsworth Common (520 acres, 210 hectares) in Warblington Parish would have reinforced the perception of the landless labourer that his traditional world was collapsing about him with no immediate hope of a better one.

The government clearly had some difficult choices to make. Civil unrest was a growing threat and radicalism in a variety of forms had increased since the French Revolution in 1792. One idea, to alleviate the distress caused by increasing food prices and falling wages, was to regulate the supply of wheat by means of a duty on foreign imports which, it was hoped, would, by maintaining domestic prices, encourage agricultural investment and increase output. Not surprisingly, these measures, known collectively as the Corn Laws, became the subject of considerable debate both inside and outside Parliament which ended only with their repeal in 1849.

William Huskisson was born on 11 March 1770 at Birtsmorton Court, Worcestershire, and he spent most of his early life in Paris where he witnessed the fall of the Bastille. Shortly after returning to London in September 1792 he

was introduced to William Pitt, prime minister; Henry Dundas, home secretary; and the young George Canning, all of whom recognized Huskisson's potential and encouraged his political ambitions. Huskisson first entered Parliament as MP for Morpeth in 1796. In 1814 he was MP for Chichester and formulating crucial parts of the Commons' committee report on corn and advocating a sliding scale of duties designed to reduce the duty in times of scarcity and increase it in times of plenty. Despite Huskisson's declaration in a Commons debate on 16 May 1814 that 'The effect of the consequent variation of price (if there were free trade in wheat) on the poorer classes would be in the highest degree injurious', the poorer classes of Havant appear to have remained unconvinced that artificially maintained prices would be of benefit to anyone other than their employers.

From the date of Cobbett's article it seems unlikely that Huskisson's effigy was burnt as part of Guy Fawkes celebrations, but it is good evidence for an inclination on the part of at least one section of Havant's population to express its feelings in effigy-burning half a century earlier than our first records of Guy Fawkes activity in the town. Some of the details of the effigy-burning as described by Cobbett (probably communicated to him by a local correspondent) are remarkably similar to those in later accounts of Guy Fawkes celebrations, suggesting the possibility of some continuity during the intervening years.

Notes and References

¹ Morgan, Gavin, The Guildford Guy Riots (1842–1865), *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, 76 (1985) 61–68

² National statistics are from Mitchell, B R, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics*, Cambridge: University Press, 1971. Local statistics are from *Victoria County History of Hampshire*, 1912 and Butler, W, *Topographical Account of the Hundred of Bosmere*, Havant, 1817

³ Hansard, 16 May

Havant Library

The Libraries Act of 1919 empowered county councils to establish libraries. Hampshire started to do this in 1925 with the appointment of a county librarian who was not so qualified. Village centres were set up, run by willing and unpaid amateurs, operating from schools and village halls and opening for a few hours each week.

When war broke out in 1939 this was the library service operating in Havant, with its population of about 6,000. It consisted of two cupboards of books, housed in the council chamber of the old Town Hall, with the stock laid out on tables, for two hours each week. It was run by Mr Midgeley, a local councillor, with the help of three or four ladies.

The arrangement of books was most haphazard. Non-fiction occupied one small table, while fiction, neither classified nor even arranged alphabetically, was laid out on two long tables – one with an unsteady leg which constantly threatened to collapse. As borrowers crowded around the tables, choosing books was a hazardous affair, and to replace them into their cupboards involved climbing on to chairs with each armful, and was a feat needing real physical

When in 1941 Mr Midgeley wished to be relieved of this post and Mrs Marjorie Perraton took it on. Books were then arranged alphabetically and efforts made to devise some easier means for borrowers. The county council was frequently urged to acquire land and build a library adequate for a growing town. The establishment of an Admiralty Research Unit at West Leigh brought into the town a number of graduate scientists and their wives, who demanded better facilities and were prepared to search for land or accommodation. Several sites were recommended to the county, one of which would have been ideal. It was near the traffic lights and with a double frontage and, at that time, very cheap, but no action was taken.

It was, however, agreed to replace the old shelves with purpose-built ones, with shutters, from which books could be selected without the effort of lifting them up and down. An increase in opening hours was also allowed when two of the part time lady helpers were paid 2s. 6d. (12½p) an hour to do the work, for two hours on two mornings each week, though Mrs Perraton still remained in charge.

For the first few years of this arrangement books were bought from a catalogue issued by the Woolston Book Company of Nottingham who had the contract to supply the county library service. The compilation of this catalogue remained a mystery – *Pride and Prejudice* was once included under the heading of 'new novels' and it was a real triumph when a sum of money was allocated for book buying and the Pelham Book Shop given a licence to supply to this amount. This was a highly satisfactory way of buying; books could be seen before purchase, delivery was prompt, local demands could be met and borrowers who were specialists in individual fields could suggest the appropriate books to buy. As a

result the library, small as it was, built up stock for quite a cross section of interests.

This state of affairs existed until 1957, during which time the Urban District Council, the press and individual borrowers made constant requests to Hampshire County Council for better facilities.

In that year a library was opened to serve Leigh Park. It consisted of a prefabricated, temporary, hutted building, sited on a piece of available land in Stockheath Lane and some distance from most of the houses on the estate. It had little office accommodation or storage space, but it was a beginning and, for the first time, a trained librarian, Frank Baguley, was appointed to run it. He was then asked to assume overall charge of the other library centres in the district.



The first Leigh Park Library in Stockheath Lane.

He must have been daunted by the task which confronted him. But with characteristic quiet persistence and imaginative foresight he set about making improvements. He discovered that a detached classroom at Fairfield school was

about to become vacant and arranged the transfer there of the Havant Library, with Mrs Grace Speight, who was in charge, and helped by two or three part time assistants. The day of the unpaid amateur was over. Although in some ways this was a happy arrangement, as the friendly and cosy atmosphere continued, the hut was anything but ideal. Its only staff room was the small lobby once used for children's outdoor clothes and the only toilet facilities were inside the building. But it was a great improvement on the previous operation and meant that the library now had the sole use of its premises and could open full time.



North Street in 1989. The library was in the original Empire Cinema. *Alan Bell.*

A small committee had been set up with representatives from all the local library centres. This formed the nucleus of a Regional Library Committee, a pilot scheme introduced by the newly appointed county librarian, Mr Lawson. It is an interesting point that Havant had a qualified librarian two years before the county did!

In 1962 regional committees were established throughout Hampshire, Mr Baguley became librarian for the south-east area and Mr R Shimmon was appointed in charge of Havant. He only stayed a short time and the post was filled by Miss Pamela Cooper.

In 1964 Havant Library moved from Fairfield to Market Parade where it occupied two rooms over the gas showrooms. This was a great improvement and in an ideal situation with shops around and a bus stop opposite. The book stock was increased and more assistants employed; for the first time there was a small

reference section and a separate room upstairs for children. But the premises were an awkward shape, there was little circulation space and it was obvious, with a short lease, that somewhere better must be found.

This happened in 1970 when the old cinema in North Street became available. It had been very imaginatively converted as a showroom for a builders' merchant and few structural adaptations had to be made to fit it as library premises.

With the reorganisation of local government in 1974, Mr. Baguley moved to be the Havant district librarian. His place was taken by Mr Geoff. Salter who was appointed chief assistant for Havant district and librarian for Havant branch.

The Final Curtain

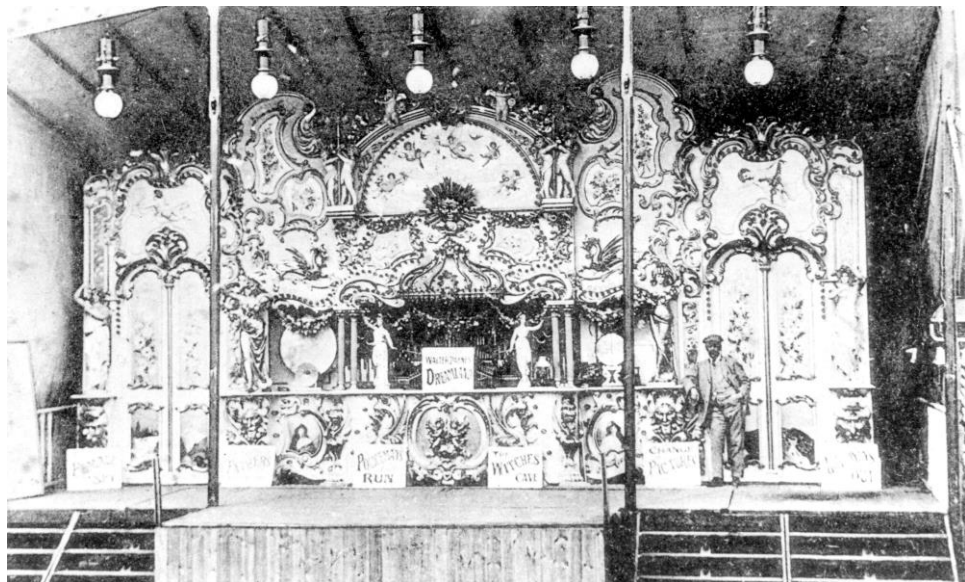
Geoff. Salter ALA, Assistant Divisional Librarian.

In 1989 the doors of Havant library finally closed. The building was demolished to make way for part of the new Meridian shopping development. It had been built 75-years-ago as the Empire Cinema, and this article has been produced to commemorate this location in North Street. In 1794 the site contained a collection of small cottages, where Thomas Batchelor carried on his trade as wheelwright and carpenter. The Batchelor family continued to occupy the site, in the 1847 directory George Batchelor is listed as blacksmith, coachbuilder and undertaker.



North Street circa 1910. The buildings on the left were demolished to make way for shops and the cinema.

Mrs Harriet Batchelor took over the business from 1860 to 1870, when three brothers, Thomas, Alfred and William Linington, originally from the Isle of Wight, set up a branch of a very successful coach-building firm on this site. Many coaches were built here for local personalities including The lord of the manor, Sir Frederick Fitzwygram of Leigh Park House.



The earliest form of public cinema was the bioscope and one regularly visited Havant. It was located in the Star meadow, which was between Market Parade and the railway station.

In 1913 the land and dwellings were sold by Richard Ellis for £600 to Southern Entertainments for the erection of a cinema. The 'Empire Kinema', designed by Architects Messrs Bucknell and Bullock, was built later the same year by local builders Alec and Fred Hobbs.

The cinema opened on the 14 July 1913 and a report in the *Southsea Observer and Hampshire Post* stated:

Without any advertisement or preliminary flourish of trumpets the Havant Empire Cinema opened on Monday evening...good houses assembled at both performances. Films shown included, Timid Mary a comedy, At the risk of her life, a drama, and a film on tiger hunting which proved particularly interesting.

In the early days of the cinema, stage acts were put on between the short silent films. On the 21 April 1913 Lillie Keith, *Daintee Comedienne*, entertained the patrons with *The Delmores* (Edie and Gertie) singing *The Principal Boy and The Chorus Girl*.

The projectionist during WW1 was Mr Smart, who also had a business as a tinsmith at the rear of the Dolphin Hotel in West Street. The charge for the front row seats at the time was 3d. (1p), and the projector was driven by an electric dynamo powered by a gas engine housed in a small building at the rear of the cinema. A story is told that a free cinema seat was given to a man from the gas power station as repayment for keeping up the gas pressure.

Lowering of the pressure caused the slowing down of the dynamo, and in turn the projector. When a breakdown occurred, power was maintained from a shop across the road run by Mr Scorer, local councillor, businessman and inventor who had his own generator. A cable was run across the road from a shop, where Waitrose now stands, and connected to the projector to keep the show going. The managers of the cinema up to 1920 were Mr and Mrs Souch of Elm Lane but then it was taken over by John Louis Cheadle Walker and his wife of Beechworth Road. On one occasion in 1930 Mr Walker, who had been big-game hunting in Africa, decorated the foyer and stairs with mounted animal heads, shields, spears and skins as an added attraction to the film *Trader Horn*.

Mr (Jenny) Wren recalled that children could go in on Saturday mornings and afternoons for 2d. (1p). They always tried to avoid giving up their tickets and then the following week try to slip past the box office while no one was looking and use them again. They then had 2d. to spend on sweets on their way home.

The first commissionaires were Joe Simmons (until 1919) and Harry Rook (until 1929), and chief projectionist from 1921 to 1936 was Mr F Dorman, who later worked at the new cinema in East Street until 1969.

In 1921 the cinema was a single storey building with no ceiling, only a roof with exposed girders. Above the cash desk at the front of the building was the projection room, its only window was large and semi-circular, originally glazed with small panes of dark red glass. The seats on the ground floor were separated by two aisles, one in the centre and one on the right-hand side.

The front seats were narrow wooden plain backed benches, the rest brown upholstered tip-up seats. The screen was at the rear of the building with a small stage area and dressing rooms behind the screen.

It was around this time that the *Lady in Red* visited Havant. She was dressed all in red, riding a red bicycle and on stage at the Empire she rendered her version of *La Paloma* to her own accompaniment on the ukulele. Admiration of these stage acts went as far as one of the commissionaires naming his daughter Lola, after Lola Trent, one of the entertainers who appeared at the Empire. At this time the usherettes wore black dresses with white aprons, and there were two 'houses' each evening with matinees every Wednesday and Saturday, and a change of programme midweek.

A typical notice from the *Evening News* of 22 February 1924 reads:

Havant Kinema

*Tola Negri, the great star of Passion, makes her bow to Havant audiences at the Empire Kinema on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, when she is being featured in **her** latest success Mad Love. The story is of a beautiful flirt who, after driving a man insane, marries his brother unknowingly.*

Tom Mix, the daredevil horseman stars in Arabia for the last three days of the week. The scenes are in the western ranches and the eastern deserts, and tell of a rancher's adventures in the Orient.

From 1929 to 1936 Arthur 'Pop' Walls took over as commissionaire and Miss Botting was cashier from 1930 to 1936. Mr Walls wore a blue uniform, cap and white gloves. Up until 1920 music was provided by a pianist, Miss Farrell; then later by a small orchestra, consisting of pianist Miss Florence Halford of Lower Grove Road, violinist Ray Till of Leigh Cottages, and celloist Marjorie Wolf. On special occasions, such as the showing of *The Four Men of the Apocalypse*, Jack Yalden, a drummer, was employed for the special effects.

The seating capacity was originally for 400, then in 1929 the building was extended by 12 feet (4 metres), a balcony was added and the interior was modernised, all done in six weeks. The balcony was built above the offices and cash desk in front of the projection room, the entrance being by stairs to the left of the cash desk. The curtains were re-upholstered in Royal Blue and in the centre above the screen, a large gold 'E' was emblazoned.

Usherettes were now dressed in blue uniforms and the prices of the seats were: Front Balcony 1s. (5p), Back Balcony 1s. 6d. (7½p), Front Downstairs 6d. (2½p), and Back Downstairs 9d. (4p). The alterations increased the capacity to 450 seats.

In June 1930 Western Electric Sound, the best system at the time, was introduced with the showing of *Broadway Melody*. The pianist was retained to put records on while advertisement slides were shown during the interval. The first films had separate sound on record which meant that film and sound had to be matched. To ensure even-thing would run smoothly, rehearsals were held in the morning and the manager would invite local railwaymen to see the film. The railwaymen who worked on late shifts were normally unable to visit the cinema and this was one way of advertising the films. A problem with matching the film and the sound was that the vibration caused by heavy lorries passing right outside caused the needle to jump, putting the film and sound out of balance.

The Empire continued until 1936 with full houses, sometimes with people sitting in the aisles, when it was decided a new cinema was needed. The last film, *Evergreen*, starring Jessie Matthews, was shown in July 1936 and the Empire Kinema closed its doors for the last time. The new Empire Cinema in East Street opened at a cost of £20,000 in August 1936.

The North Street building remained empty for many years and was used as an Admiralty torpedo store during WW2. Local people remembered being on fire-watching duty here during the war. The building was eventually purchased by Reeves, the builders' merchants, in 1950. They removed the balcony and stairs, added a complete first floor and new stairs, windows were also put in on the north and west walls. In May 1970 the building was sold to Hampshire County Council and opened in June as a full time area library.

After 18 years as Havant Library, the building was to come down. It started with *Silents Please* and ended up *Silence Please*. Most of its life has been dedicated to entertainment and information and now the final curtain must fall.

Sir Thomas George Staunton Bart, 1781–1859

Of the many distinguished men who have added lustre to south Hampshire perhaps none has been so unjustly neglected as Sir George Thomas Staunton. A European authority on China when scarcely anything was known about that secretive country; Fellow of the Royal Society; co-Founder of the Royal Asiatic Society; Hon. DCL of Oxford and MP for nearly 30 years. His name is perpetuated in Staunton Road, running from New Road to West Street, and in the Sir George Staunton Country Park which was his estate.

Born at Salisbury in 1781 he was the only surviving son of Sir George Leonard Staunton, Bart, about whom something should be said. Holding a medical degree

Staunton moved in literary circles in London and became a friend of Dr Johnson, but, finding little scope for his ambitions, he went out to the West Indies where he prospered and became ADC to the Governor Lord Macartney. On the capture of the island by the French, Staunton was taken to Paris where his talent for negotiating secured Macartney's release and his own freedom. Later, accompanying Macartney to India he quickly secured treaties of peace both with the French and with the native rulers and was rewarded by being made a Baronet. When Macartney headed a mission to China, Staunton went out as his deputy but ill health enforced his return. He died in 1801 and lies in Westminster Abbey.

His son, George Thomas Staunton, spent his early years in Ireland and was educated privately. His father had a poor opinion of the standard 'Classical' education and George Thomas Staunton was tutored in science and technology. By the age of 12 he could speak six languages. His education included three days at Harrow and one term at Cambridge.



George Staunton at an Imperial audience with the Chinese Emperor Qianlong in Jehol receiving a silk purse. From a 1793 watercolour painting by William Alexander.

In 1791 his father took him on an extensive tour of England, and it seems likely that during this tour Sir George decided to take his son with him the following year on Macartney's important mission to China. This embassy was one of the most costly and magnificent ever to leave this country and Sir George determined that his young son should play no minor part. At Naples he engaged two Chinese to accompany the embassy and to teach his son Chinese during the long voyage. Nominally the young boy of 12-years-old was page to Macartney but so apt a pupil was he that at the Emperor's court at Peking he was the only member of the embassy to talk to the Emperor in Chinese. In his account of the embassy Macartney says:

Sir George Staunton's son of twelve years, during our passage from England, learned not only enough to make himself understood but acquired such a facility in writing Chinese characters that he copied all our diplomatic papers for the Chinese Government in so neat and expeditious a manner as to occasion great astonishment among them.

On another occasion during this visit Macartney relates:

I delivered to the Viceroy the note of compliment to be transmitted to Peking. Observing the character of the writing to be remarkably neat he enquired who had transcribed it? and when I informed him that it was little George Staunton he would scarcely believe that a boy of twelve-years-old could have made such progress nor was he perfectly satisfied till he had actually seen him add at the bottom of the paper in Chinese characters that it had been written by him.

This young boy was also fluent in French, Latin and Greek.

Some six years later young Staunton was appointed to a writer ship in the East India Company's establishment at Canton at £2,000 per annum and six months holiday a year; an appointment that caused much jealousy among the sons of the company's Governors who regarded such posts as their prerogative; but Staunton had one overwhelming advantage, he could speak and write Chinese while others had to rely on interpreters.

On the death of his father in 1801 he inherited the title; but his advancement in the company was secured by his own abilities and hard work. He had translated a treatise on vaccination into Chinese in 1805 and was the means of introducing the practice into that country. A few years later he translated the *Fundamental Laws* (Penal Code – still used in Hong Kong) of China into English and had the

distinction of being the first to translate a Chinese book into that tongue. In 1816 he was appointed head of the factory, and in the same year was one of the three King's Commission of Embassy sent to Peking (Beijing). They were to make representations on the conduct of the Mandarins towards the merchants of Canton and it was his objections to the universal 'kowtow' that secured its waiver. This was only the second time that any party of Englishmen had been permitted to advance so far into the interior of China. He returned to this country the following year, the recognised authority on China, consulted alike by politicians and East India Company officials. On the founding of the Royal Asiatic



Staunton's Leigh Park House in 1858 with his Gothic Library

Society he presented to their library the whole of his China works, some 3,000 volumes, besides 200 European.

Staunton was still a young man and had no intention of remaining idle. Resolving to enter public life he was elected the MP for St Michael's Cornwall in 1818 and represented this constituency for eight years. For a short time he represented Heytesbury in Wiltshire before returning to South Hampshire in 1832; as a Whig he voted for the Reform Bill of 1832.

As early as 1820 he had purchased the lease of the Leigh Park Estate from William Garrett and in 1827 he bought the freehold from the Bishop of Winchester for £2,075; he was, however, only in residence there for a few months each year until becoming MP for South Hampshire. He was returned as MP for Portsmouth in 1838 and held the seat continuously for 14 years.

Soon after purchasing the Leigh Park Estate he increased it by the purchase of Havant Farm and in 1832 added Bedhampton Farm. He found relaxation from Parliamentary affairs by further embellishing his house and grounds; his most ambitious addition to the former being his Gothic Library which is the only remaining part.



Sir George Staunton's Gothic Library. Grade II listed.

Built in the form of an octagonal chapter house with richly wrought ceiling and fittings of oak, it had eight stained glass windows representing his male and female forebears, with their appropriate coats of arms. The shutters to the windows were painted to represent shelves of books so that when closed they appeared as a continuation of his bookshelves. On the south front of the house a colonnade gave access to a terrace, which was 140 feet (42m) long, leading to a Dutch garden from which a gravelled terrace led one first to the wooden Swiss House and thence to the Cone House. From this point could be seen the 50-foot-high (15m) Obelisk, which Staunton erected to the memory of his friend George Canning but which is no longer there.

In a clump of trees on a nearby knoll called Temple Lawn stood a small building with an Ionic portico called The Temple. It was here that Staunton chose to commemorate his parents and friends in an original way by erecting monumental urns on pedestals inscribed to the memory of his father, Sir George Leonard Staunton, and his mother Jane, Lady Staunton, and eight inscribed busts to the memory of friends. The Shell House, built of ornamental flint work contained a collection of natural curiosities; most of this still remains.

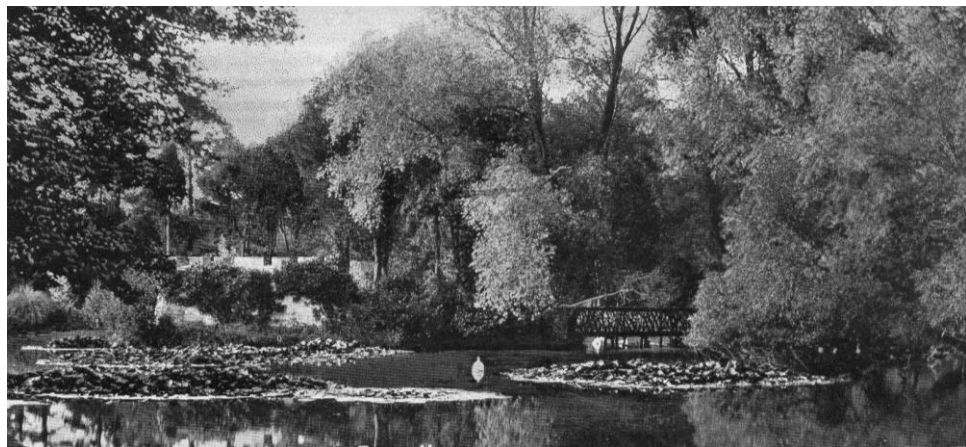
The Beacon, with which everyone is familiar, stands on high ground near the Rowlands Castle road and formerly carried a flag staff. Built in 1830 in the form of a small Ionic temple it was constructed of material obtained from Purbrook House when this was demolished. It is said that in Sir Frederick Fitzwygram's time a flag was flown on The Beacon as a signal to the residents of Uppark House that Sir Frederick and Lady Fitzwygram were 'at home' to visitors. Perhaps it was for this very reason that Sir George Staunton built the Beacon on the knoll, which is the highest ground in a direct north-easterly line to Uppark House.



The Beacon. Grade II listed.

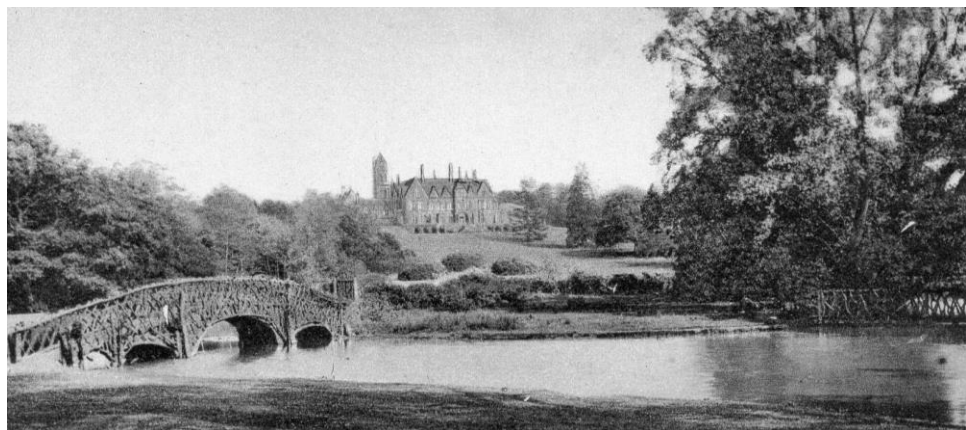
The artificial lake, based on the Lake of Peking, that still forms an attractive feature of the grounds, had three islands of contrasting design. Cottage Island was conventional enough having only a cottage for the under-gardener, and Swan Island had an ornamental house for swans, but Fort Island was much more elaborate and was evidently intended as a constant reminder of Staunton's sojourn in the East, having a battery of Purbeck stone pierced for nine guns and flying on a tall mast the yellow flag of China, which was hoisted each day. Other reminders were provided by a Chinese Boat House, a Turkish Summer House, a Chinese Bridge and an elaborate hexagonal Chinese Summer House. Only remnants of Sir George Staunton's buildings now remain to remind us of the idiosyncratic way in which he embellished his estate, but many magnificent

specimens of exotic trees and shrubs still survive as evidence of his wider interests.



The fort can just be seen on Fort Island. Circa 1915.

The road to Rowlands Castle ran within close to the front door of Staunton's house and he had this diverted to its present route in 1828 and built a lodge where his drive emerged into it; another lodge stood at the northern end of the existing farm buildings.



The Chinese Bridge and the bridge to Fort Island. The later house is in the background.

In 1850, when a new burial ground for the parish was an urgent necessity, Sir George gave land at the bottom of New Lane to provide one-acre (0.4 hectare) of

ground for members of the Church of England and one-quarter-acre (0.1 hectare) for Dissenters.

In his benefactions he did not forget the home of his early years. During the Irish famine of 1845/46 he remitted the rents of his Irish tenants for two years.

There is no doubt of Staunton's popularity in his own district for, when he was contesting the South Hampshire seat, a letter was written to the *Portsmouth Herald* signed by more than 20 of Havant's leading townsmen, affirming his popularity in the town. Sir George Staunton died unmarried in London on 10 August 1859 and his estate was inherited by descendants of his sister, Lucy Barbara.



The 18th-century Regency Farmhouse. Grade II listed.

Havant Market

A charter, authorising the holding of a weekly market, was granted to the town in the reign of King John, and a market house is thought to have been built in the time of Henry VI, adjoining the church wall on its eastern side.

Little of the market's activities are recorded until 1645 when the Court Leet warned the Lord of the Manor that its 'sealing, walling and fencing' must be repaired forthwith or: *We pain (penalise) him £5 to be paid to the poor of Havant.* However, nothing had happened by the following year and the penalty was raised to £10. By 1710, more than 60 years later, the Market House had fallen down and was rebuilt on its former site. Local Government was, apparently, no speedier then than it is now! The new building consisted of an open passage with an inner enclosure, fitted with stalls and 'the usual requisites for market purposes'. Adjoining was a cage, and overall a room, used as a schoolroom and a place where the Lord of the Manor held his courts or transacted his manorial business.

The Market House stood, as a market should, in the centre of the town, with the Homewell stream conveniently nearby where stock could be watered.

It was pulled down in about 1800 and rebuilt, but apparently not very satisfactorily as, only 28 years later, there were complaints that it was a nuisance, so it was taken down. At some time after that, but the date is unrecorded, a market opened in the Star Meadow; the road leading to it was called Market Lane and ran from North Street to the land that subsequently became the park – where the northern end of Market Parade development now stands.

In the early days of this century Oliver Wyatt, whose family ran an estate agents in the town and did the auctioning at the Market, acquired Dog Kennel Farm. This lay between North Street and Prince George Street and was bounded by a flint wall, a small part of which still remains. The market was transferred to this site. It was a convenient situation for a railway siding, alongside the Eastern Road, where livestock could be carried to and from Portsmouth. At the north-west corner of this piece of land one of the Fitzwygram family had erected a brick built gymnasium where a Mr Spencer drilled the local boys and girls to such effect that his discipline is still remembered. It was also used for furniture sales and, during WW2 it became an egg grading station before being finally demolished.

Until 1939 Havant had a flourishing small town Tuesday market with cattle stalls, pig and sheep pens and a small covered corner where auctioning took place. Farmers sent livestock, over short distances, on the hoof and in carts. They were auctioned, often to local butchers and slaughtered in one of the two slaughterhouses in the town. Indeed, a notice in the window of Standings, the pork butchers, advertised well into the war years: 'Sausages from pigs that died happy' – and, presumably, locally!

The inclusion of a small orchard adjoining the market site, sometime in the 1920s, meant that anything other than the large stock could be sold separately. There, on Tuesday afternoons, when the serious business of the day was over, domestic buying and selling took place. Eggs, chicken, rabbits, fruit, garden produce and even bunches of flowers were auctioned to housewives in the friendliest possible way. Mr Gates, the auctioneer and, from about 1936, the market owner, was a marvellous and genial sales man who knew most of his customers, and their tastes, though their names reached his ears in garbled form via his assistant who was slightly deaf.

On market days extended licences were granted to the Star and Six Bells public houses and later also to the White Hart and Perseverance. The presence of the market in North Street probably accounted for the number of public houses in that road alone and was an indication that there were many buyers needing refreshment. At Christmas a fat stock and poultry show was a more than local event.

When war came in 1939 the government clamped down on the sale of large livestock, as a preliminary to food rationing. The small sales still took place on Tuesdays and as commodities became scarcer the market was used for the sale of almost any second hand goods. Pictures from sold up homes were offered at two shilling a dozen and snapped up for glass to repair windows or greenhouses and the wooden frames for kindling. Used furniture found willing buyers.

The market survived the war and livestock was back by 1954 though no longer for auction and, in common with many other small markets, its days were numbered. There had been considerable tightening of legislation on the slaughter of animals and a modern and highly hygienic abattoir had been opened at Fontley. Wartime, too, had seen great development in motor transport and butchers found it simpler to go to the large central markets and buy all their meat at the same place. Havant market was no longer a viable undertaking.

So, though on 20 January 1956 Wyatt's advertisement in the Hampshire Telegraph included the statement: *Havant Market every Tuesday. Live and dead stock, eggs and poultry.* A week later that notice was omitted. Havant market had been closed, an event unrecorded even in the local press. With the retirement of 'young Mr Gates' all its records, books, bills, notices were destroyed.

The following year the site was sold and the North Street Arcade, a small, pleasant, shopping precinct was built, while a few years later the Star Meadow land suffered the same fate.

Perhaps the closure of the market at this date was a sign of the times. In its 700 years of activity Havant had been a small, country market town. By 1956 it was already developing into the industrial centre it has now become, and people who can buy packaged goods at the supermarket would no longer be interested in bidding for a bunch of flowers or a peck of apples.



The North Street Arcade covers the whole site of the second market.

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